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INTRODUCTION.

THE numerous and important diseases incidental to the Female have not till lately been so *thoroughly understood, and carefully investigated*, as their severe and complicated nature so preeminently demands. During the earlier and more curable stages they are frequently neglected and concealed from a sense of delicacy, and only when their fatal ravages render it imperiously necessary, are medical practitioners consulted; they have, then, too often advanced beyond the power of remedy, and palliation is all that medicine can effect.

It becomes, therefore, a matter of the deepest importance, to give such information respecting the diseases of the sexual organs of females as will enable the sufferer to understand the nature of the different varieties, to remedy those which are easily curable, and to distinguish the most formidable; and to describe the seat and symptoms to their medical adviser.

The diseases which this volume embraces are principally those of the uterus or womb, and the parts connected with it: as some knowledge of the situation of this organ, and the sources from which the blood-vessels, which supply it, and its nerves are derived, we shall give a short account of their anatomical structure and position.

The womb is situated between the rectum, or last of the intestines, and the bladder. Its

function is to receive the first rudiments of the foetus, and to assist in the full development of all its parts, until it attains that state of perfection, in which it is destined to enter into the world, and form a new living being. The substance of the womb, which is of considerable thickness, appears to be composed of ligamentous and muscular fibres, small branches of nerves, some lymphatic vessels, and arteries and veins innumerable. The intercostal nerves, or those which run from the back between the ribs, supply it with nerves; and its arteries are derived from the hypogastric and hæmorrhoidal, the former running down close to the back part of the pelvis, and the latter supplying the lower portion of the intestinal canal.

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THE
LADY'S MEDICAL GUIDE.

MENSES, OR CATAMENIA.

THIS periodical evacuation from the womb generally commences, in this country, at the age of from fourteen to fifteen; and sometimes, in plethoric females, as early as twelve, and in weakly, or leucophlegmatic subjects, as late as eighteen. In warm climates it often appears about the age of eight or nine years; in temperate ones at thirteen or fourteen, and in the colder regions not before nineteen or twenty. The quantity discharged varies from four to ten ounces, according to the temperament, and the discharge continues from two to eight or

ten days. In some plethoric, or very nervous subjects, there is often not more than a fortnight's interval, but the general period is about a month, and hence it is termed the *menses*, from the Latin word *mensis*, a month. Usually, the earlier the period it first appears the sooner it finally ceases. In this country it generally disappears, in persons of lax and delicate habits, about the forty-fifth year, and in spare habits as early as the thirty-fifth year.

The female system being destined to supply a foetus with nourishment for its growth, is adapted for the formation of a greater quantity of blood than what is necessary for its own support. This increased quantity must necessarily be in some way evacuated; and this takes place from the organ to which it is naturally directed, when it is required for the developement and growth of the offspring.* By this means the disturbance, which must

* Some physiologists assert that this discharge is not blood, because, when collected in quantity, it does not coagulate. In plethoric subjects, when in excess, it is very common for coagula to appear, generally termed by nurses, clots. No difference between this discharge and blood has been discovered on chemical examination.

necessarily have arisen, on conception taking place, had it been directed to other parts, is avoided. The late Mr. Abernethy was of opinion, that this periodical evacuation, by soothing the parts, prevents irritation; but this opinion is certainly not correct, for they are usually in a state of greater irritation after than preceding the evacuation. Menstruation naturally commences at the period the full developement of the system, and the sympathies between the stomach, breasts, and uterus take place. The nature of the functions of the womb, and the peculiar sympathy of that organ with several parts of the body, and the various diseases which ensue when the monthly office is not properly performed, render this a very critical period of life. The usual precursors of the menstrual evacuation are, a general load and oppression,—pain in the head and various parts of the body, particularly the back and lower extremities,—flushings in the face,—a fulness of the breasts,—and, in those of a weak and irritable habit of body, a pallid skin, general languor, want of appetite, terrors, tremors, distressing dreams, and various hysterical affections.

Great attention should be paid to the system at this period; and all causes tending to produce derangement of it, should be avoided. If the bowels have a tendency to constipation, it should be obviated by an opening medicine that will increase the circulation of blood in the bowels, as the watery extract of aloes, with a drop of the oil of pennyroyal, or the compound decoction of aloes. The saline purgatives, as Epsom salt, Glauber's salt, the Cheltenham salt, or Seidlitz powders, are very improper, in consequence of their effects in diminishing the circulation in the viscera of the abdomen, and thereby occasioning preternatural afflux of blood to the head or the lungs. The appearance of the monthly discharge often throws light on the state of the general health, and even the nature of a disease; hence, when it is thin and very pale, it is evident the blood is poor, *i. e.* it is overloaded with serum, a strong indication of debility of the digestive organs, or of imperfect digestion; and, in cases of dropsy, it proves that the cause is debility, and not that variety of the disease arising from increased arterial action, in which loss of blood is necessary.

By its effects on many local affections, we are often enabled to determine whether the disease be purely nervous, or dependant on, or aggravated by, local congestion or plethora. Hence, in a case of head-ache, the nature of which is doubtful, in consequence of being attended with giddiness, and other symptoms of congestion of the blood-vessels of the brain, the complaint, if nervous, is very rarely relieved by the discharge, but often aggravated by it; whereas, when it is occasioned by plethora, it generally abates as the discharge advances, and often terminates with it. The same may be said of numerous other local affections, particularly of the lungs, of the heart, of the stomach, and of the uterus itself. Most nervous affections generally run higher, and even come on a day or two preceding the discharge; and this is the case in inflammatory affections; but the former, for the most part, increase with the discharge, whilst the latter abate.

By the manner in which the discharge comes on, some idea of the condition of the womb may be formed; so that, in cases of barrenness, we may say, with some degree of certainty,

if the uterus be chiefly in fault. When, in a barren female, it comes on with pain about the region of the uterus, or in the loins, we may conclude that the uterus is not in a healthy state; and when the pain occurs, for the first time, about the age of from thirty-eight to forty, and recurs at every period, and there be also a mucous discharge from the vagina, commonly called whites, it is probable the uterus is either predisposed to organic disease, or that it has taken place, and consequently that the mucous discharge continuing between the periods of menstruation, is not simple whites, but symptomatic of a disease in the neck or walls of the uterus, which would be aggravated by an astringent injection. In girls of a full habit of body it will be prudent to use rather a restricted diet, and particularly a short time previously to the expected appearance of the evacuation. Cold and wet to the feet should be particularly avoided.

A great discrepancy of opinion exists among the lecturers on midwifery as to menstruation taking place during pregnancy. It is common to hear of females being regular during pregnancy; but those who suppose it never takes

place when the uterus is impregnated, contend that the discharge is pure blood, and not the natural periodical secretion; the fact, we believe, is, that in some females the secretion takes place, in part, from the upper portion of the vagina, and such females will probably have a slight discharge at the usual periods, although the uterus is impregnated. The circumstance, by no means uncommon, of a red discharge recurring at the usual periods, free from clots, during pregnancy, should make practitioners cautious in giving a decided opinion as to pregnancy, when the person asserts that she is regular.

When the general health is clearly suffering from the want of the periodical secretion, or when, at the period of puberty, irritation or inflammatory excitement exists in the lungs or brain, occasioning a determination of blood to either, which often occurs in scrofulous subjects, it is termed *retention* of the menses; and when, after it has repeatedly taken place for some time, it does not, from other causes than conception, return at the usual period, it is named *suppression*.

PAINFUL OR DIFFICULT MENSTRUATION.

FEW complaints are more distressing than painful menstruation. Some nervous females suffer so acutely from spasms in the region of the uterus, and sometimes in the stomach, and pains in the loins, that the whole nervous system, and particularly the brain, become greatly disordered, so as to produce violent hysterical fits, and even catalepsy. A considerable degree of pain in the loins, and nervous disturbance, generally accompany the first appearance of the menses, till its regularity is fully established. When painful menstruation occurs at a later period, it may arise from cold, irritability of constitution, costiveness, or inflammation of the womb or a neighbouring part; but a very common cause is a morbid sensibility of the spinal nerves leading to the uterus, from irregularity in the vertebræ. Women who have had puerperal fever, commonly called the *child-bed fever*,—those who have not married till late in life,—those of a nervous temperament, whose general texture is rigid,—and particularly

those of a scrofulous habit, are very subject to it.

Dr. Denman was of opinion, that painful menstruation is connected with the formation of a membrane in the womb ; and he thought that as long as this membrane is formed, conception could not take place. To this formation he found married and unmarried women were equally subject. Those cases which are accompanied with the separation of this membrane, are probably instances of early abortion. This is a complaint to which many married women are subject, and is a common cause of barrenness, — the embryo being expelled almost immediately after it has passed into the womb. The instances of painful menstruation that we have observed, without the formation of this membrane, have, for the most part, occurred in nervous or scrofulous persons.

Those who are subject to painful menstruation, or to spasms in the stomach, or any other part of the abdomen, immediately before or during the period, should be very particular in keeping the feet warm, and should wear flannel next the skin, and avoid

green vegetables, and raw fruit of every kind. Five corns of white pepper, swallowed three times a day, commencing three days previously to the expected period, is, in some parts of Italy, a very popular preventive of painful menstruation; and we have met with cases in which it has succeeded in this country.

The remedy we have found most efficacious in preventing painful menstruation, or in subduing the pain, is the acetate of morphine, with camphorated julep, in the following proportion:—

Take of Solution of acetate of morphine, 10
drops;

Camphorated julep, an ounce and a
half.—Mix.

This draught, taken every night at bed-time, commencing three days before the expected period, we have uniformly found to have the effect of allaying the morbid sensibility of the nerves connected with the uterus, so as to prevent spasms or pain; and in no instance has it ever had an injurious effect in diminishing, increasing, or suspending the secretion. If the patient has been accustomed to take opium or

laudanum in large doses, the quantity of the acetate of morphine should be proportionably increased: the dose of ten drops is equal to twenty of laudanum. When pains or spasms have taken place, from twenty to thirty drops of the solution of the acetate of morphine, (according to their violence or obstinacy,) mixed with a pint of gruel, or half a pint of rosemary tea, may also be administered. If the nerves of the loins be in a state of morbid excitement, either of the following liniments may be gently rubbed over the loins.

No. 1.

Take of Camphorated volatile liniment, an ounce and a half;

Liquid laudanum, 4 drachms.—Mix.

No. 2.

Take of Green oil of belladonna,

Oil of almonds,

Liquor of carbonate of ammonia; of each half an ounce.

The hip-bath, at the temperature of 100, gradually increased to 112, will also be proper.

When distortion or curvature of the spine exists, the liniment of the green oil of belladonna, &c. (No. 2.) rubbed over the lower portion of the spine every night and morning, (commencing three days before the expected event,) we have found to act powerfully as a preventive. In this case, an horizontal position should be observed as much as possible, for three or four days before the expected time, and continued till the discharge has ceased. Some very interesting letters, on the effect of spinal irregularity on the health of females, by the experienced Dr. Harrison, appear in the first, the third, the fourth, the sixth, and the seventh numbers of the *Monthly Gazette of Practical Medicine*.

A lavement of twenty drops of the solution of acetate of morphine, in half a pint of pennyroyal tea, or camphorated julep, administered once a day, always proves very efficacious. Among the remedies that have been recommended for painful menstruation, those which we have found to succeed are, the volatile tincture of colchicum seeds, (a small tea-spoonful, twice a day, in a wine-glassful of camphorated julep); extract of henbane, (four grains,

with camphorated julep,) twice a day; extract of cicuta, (two grains,) twice a day, with a small wine-glass of pennyroyal water; prussic acid, (one drop,) three times a day, in a small wine-glassful of camphorated julep. A lavenent, composed of ten grains of the extract of henbane, twenty drops of the solution of acetate of morphine, and half a pint of thin gruel, (to which four ounces of senna tea may be added, if the bowels be confined,) is the most efficacious preventive or remedy with which we are acquainted. When the uterus is in an unhealthy state, as indicated by an excessive red discharge, with clots,—a sense of bearing down on standing,—a constant dull pain in the loins, and fluor albus, with little or no intermission, four grains of the blue pill, with two grains of the extract of cicuta or four grains of the extract of henbane, should be taken every night, for a week preceding the expected period, and a wine-glassful of the following mixture twice a day:—

Take of Infusion of the chirayita herb, 7 oz.;
Subcarbonate of soda, 2 drachms.—
Mix.

In such cases the chirayita is a most valuable deobstruent. If the pain should be very acute or obstinate, a suppository, composed of extract of henbane, twelve grains, blue pill, ten grains, acetate of morphine, half a grain, may be introduced once or twice a day into the vagina.

When the system is plethoric, and the vessels of the head are much overloaded, or if blood escapes from the nose, or is brought up from the stomach or lungs, or discharged from piles, and the secretion does not take place from the womb, or if it be not sufficiently copious, abstraction of blood from the loins or thighs, by cupping, will be proper, and, if the lungs be oppressed, or the brain much compressed, may prevent very serious mischief.

Tight lacing should be avoided, particularly for a few days previously to the time the discharge should take place.

OF RETENTION OF THE MENSES.

(*Chlorosis, or Green Sickness.*)

IN this country, as I have already observed, the uterus generally commences its periodical secretion from the age of fourteen to eighteen years; but in tropical climates it is common for it to take place at the age of nine, and I have often met with instances in this country of its occurring about the same period; but such cases are, for the most part, the consequences of a plethoric state of the viscera of the abdomen, and are unattended with the appearances of puberty or maturity of mind which characterise females at the same age in tropical climates: it is, indeed, more a symptom of a disordered uterus than the natural periodical discharge, and often ceases after regularly recurring for several months; the general health, at the same time, actually improving; and, at the period of puberty, a proper secretion of the uterus generally takes place. The period of puberty in females varying from the age of fourteen to twenty, the non-appearance of the discharge,

even at the age of twenty or twenty-two, is not to be considered a case of *morbid* retention, unless the constitution is evidently suffering from a want of it. If a female, at the age of from fifteen to twenty years, with appearances of maturity of body and mind, suffers from irregular distribution of the blood, sometimes in excess to the head, occasioning head-ache, confusion of mind, depression of spirits, loss of appetite, disturbed sleep, &c., — or to the lungs, &c. occasioning difficulty of breathing, cough, irregular action or palpitation of the heart, — there can be no doubt that the general health is suffering from suspension of the monthly discharge; and, if the bowels be in a sluggish state, that the retention arises from a want of nervous and arterial energy in the abdominal viscera; and if means be not adopted to invigorate the nerves and arteries of the bowels, so as to promote the circulation through them, and direct it to the uterus, serious organic mischief will probably take place, either in the brain, lungs, or mesenteric glands, common effects in scrofulous subjects.

Generally speaking, the non-appearance of the uterine secretion at the period of puberty, is the consequence of some irritative or inflammatory affection of the lungs, of the mesenteric glands, or of the brain, occasioning an afflux of blood and nervous energy to the disordered parts instead of the uterus, the consequences of which are, the arteries of the uterus become feeble, and the circulation in the intestinal canal, and in the extremities, languid. These occurrences generally take place in the scrofulous or leucophlegmatic habit, or in subjects predisposed to tubercular or scrofulous disease of the lungs, or to mesenteric consumption.

When the constitution is suffering from retention of the menses, the patient is affected with heaviness, listlessness, fatigue on the least exercise, palpitations at the heart, pains in the back, the loins, or hips, inactivity of the intestines, acidity in the stomach, a depraved appetite for chalk, lime, and various other articles, and frequently all the symptoms of irritative or nervous indigestion. In the course of a few months the face becomes pale, and of a yellowish hue, sometimes

verging upon green, whence it has been vulgarly termed "*green sickness*;" the lips lose their natural colour; the eyes are encircled with a livid areola; the feet affected with oedematous swellings; the breathing, on walking fast, or on ascending a hill, is oppressed; and exertion of the body generally occasions palpitation of the heart and sickness. There are also sometimes cough, various hysterical affections, and hectic fever. This state often continues for two or three years; and when disease does not take place in the lungs, mesenteric glands, or in the head, it often terminates gradually in the establishment of sound health.

The digestive organs being always more or less disordered, and the bowels confined, it is proper to administer an aperient in conjunction with a stomachic medicine, although the vessels of the lungs and brain are overloaded. The principal object of an aperient medicine being to promote the circulation of the blood in the viscera of the abdomen, a slightly stimulating one should be employed,*

* The saline purgatives, as the Epsom, the Rochelle, Glauber's, the Cheltenham waters, the Seidlitz powders,

as the extract of aloes. The following composition I have found very beneficial:—

Take of Extract of chirayita,
—— of aloes (socotrine), of each
1 drachm;
Subcarbonate of iron,
Subcarbonate of soda, dried, of each
1 scruple;
Essential oil of pennyroyal, 20 drops.
— Mix well together, and divide
into thirty-six pills.

One, two, or three to be taken two or three times a day, with a wine-glassful of infusion of juniper berries or buchu leaves,* so as to produce one alvine evacuation daily. If the bowels should be obstinately costive, it will

&c. by diminishing the nervous and arterial energy of the bowels, and thereby occasioning a preternatural determination to the head and lungs, are very improper aperients, not only in cases of retention but of suppression of the menses.

* The infusion of buchu leaves, or of juniper berries, by stimulating the kidneys, will promote the principal object of the pills.

be advisable to empty them by an active dose of the cathartic extract, (fifteen grains in three pills;) and if it should not succeed, a purgative clyster of a simple decoction of aloes; after which the above stomachic aperient pills will probably keep them in a regular state. This composition, in case the lungs, brain, or mesenteric glands have not sustained serious mischief, generally improves the health; and, notwithstanding some of the ingredients are stimulating, it often allays irritation in the lungs and brain, by promoting the circulation of blood in the bowels. If the stomach should be in a morbid state of excitement, or the pills should produce nausea, a lavement, composed of a drachm of aloes, dissolved in a pint of infusion of pennyroyal, camomile flowers, and a small proportion of savine, may be administered every evening or forenoon, at the temperature of 95 or 98. The aloes, finely powdered, will readily dissolve in the compound infusion. By some ancient authors, the leaves of savine (*juniperus sabina* of Linnæus) are highly extolled as an uterine deobstruent; and, throughout the continent, savine is a popular remedy both for

retention and suppression of the uterine secretion. An eminent physician-accoucheur recommends the powdered leaves of savine to be administered in conjunction with a "warm stimulating purgative," as the following pills:—

Take of The pill of aloes and myrrh ;
Compound extract of bitter apple ;
Powdered leaves of savine ; of each
2 scruples. — Mix : and after
forming a mass with mucilage of
gum-arabic, divide it into thirty
pills, of which three may be taken
night and morning.

The Doctor adds — " After the bowels have been well acted upon, and the stomach is able to bear it, administer steel wine, as a drachm or more, two or three times a day, with pennyroyal water." The dose of three of the foregoing pills twice a day is much too large to continue for many days. I have known a wine-glassful of an infusion of savine, taken twice a day for a fortnight, succeed in several obstinate cases of retention, to produce the uterine secretion in languid constitutions; but, being a powerful

nervous stimulant, it should be administered with great caution, in cases attended with plethora or febrile excitement. If, after improving the general health, and keeping up a regular state of the bowels by the pills of the extract of chirayita, &c. (p. 19), the uterus should remain indolent, it will be proper to have recourse to a medicine that will act more immediately on it. With this view, four grains of the blue pill may be administered every other night for a fortnight, which very rarely fail to produce the desired effect in the course of a month. If, however, the secretion should not take place in the course of a fortnight after the blue pill is discontinued, the uterus may be stimulated once a day, by passing through its region a gentle electric shock.*

* Professor Hamilton, of Edinburgh, sometime since recommended a tourniquet to be applied to each femoral artery during the use of this remedy, for the purpose of increasing the afflux of blood to the uterus; and, in obstinate cases of retention, the practice is very likely to succeed. Dry cupping of the thighs and legs, and electric sparks applied to the mouth of the uterus, in some instances, have also proved powerful auxiliaries to internal medicines.

A topical remedy (an injection of spirit of hartshorn, mixed with milk, into the vagina,) has lately been found very successful in France, by M. Lavagna, and by some practitioners in this country. This remedy we have known to succeed in a few cases of long standing. Dr. Chisholm, of Canterbury, has employed it (twenty drops of the spirit of hartshorn with three table-spoonsful of tepid milk) in several obstinate cases of retention, and in *every instance*, he says, with "success." From the peculiar structure of the neck of the uterus, and of the vagina, so powerful a stimulus should be employed with great caution; for if the parts should be too much stimulated, serious structural mischief might ensue. The parents of young ladies, and the patients themselves, generally object to the use of such a remedy; but on being informed that recovery absolutely depends on the secretion being speedily produced, (cases of which often occur,) or even when the system is brought into a state that the production of the discharge would give a chance of recovery, instead of persisting in their objections, they become advocates for

its immediate adoption.* If, notwithstanding the general health be established by the foregoing means, and the injection of harts-horn should not succeed, it will be proper to imitate nature, by abstracting four or five ounces of blood every five weeks, till the natural secretion takes place. Some eminent physicians and surgeons recommend the blood to be taken from a vein of the foot, a practice which others have ridiculed, because they suppose the blood so taken, coming from the general mass, cannot act more beneficially than when taken from the arm. Experience has proved that frequent abstraction of blood from any part of the body, increases the determination to it; and, assuredly, in cases of retention of the menses, it is desirable, particularly when the head or lungs are disordered, to increase the afflux to the lower extremities. The menstrual discharge being from arteries, the blood should be taken from an artery instead of a vein; and

* Objections to this remedy being generally made in private practice, it should not be employed till its exhibition clysterwise has had a fair trial.

as the blood abstracted by cupping is chiefly arterial, this mode of taking it is preferable to opening a vein; and as the scarification and application of the cups tend to increase the determination of blood and nervous energy in the direction of the uterus, it is likely to prove more beneficial than opening an artery. The blood, by cupping, may be taken either from the lowermost part of the back, from the thighs, from the fleshy parts of the legs, or from the perinæum. Abstraction of blood, even from a small artery in the lower extremities, may be followed by very troublesome consequences. The use of the warm hip-bath three times a week, the warm foot-bath every night, friction over the lower part of the bowels, exercise (as dancing, skipping, riding on horseback, &c.), unless contra-indicated by an inflammatory affection of the lungs or head, are powerful auxiliaries to medicine in promoting the uterine secretion.* If the stomachic aperient pills (of chirayita, &c. p. 19) should not operate sufficiently on

* Dancing, combining exercise with amusement to the mind, is preferable to any other kind of exercise.

the bowels, a solution of a table-spoonful of common salt in a pint of water, heated to about 100 degrees (Fahr.), may be injected into the rectum once or twice a day. This remedy will not only prove beneficial in promoting the aperient effects of the pills, but, by stimulating the rectum, and acting as a fomentation to the uterus, will operate powerfully as an auxiliary in bringing on the secretion. If the blue pill should, with the stomachic aperient pills, (p. 19,) produce more than one or two evacuations daily, the dose of the latter should be decreased. The feet should be kept warm by friction with flannel every night and morning, and by wearing flannel or worsted socks. If the head or forehead should become hot, or giddiness occur, cold water should be applied to the head or forehead every morning, or twice a day, unless considerable irritation exists in the chest.

If the chest be free from disease, a gently stimulating and moderately nutritious diet will be proper. Wine and spirituous liquors should be avoided. In case the blood-vessels of the lungs should be much overloaded, or inflammatory excitement should run high in

the chest, (indicated by shortness of breath, particularly on walking or ascending a hill or stairs, acute pains, or what are termed stitches, slight fever, dry short cough, frequent shiverings, &c.) attention should be directed more to the state of the lungs, than to the uterus; and no strong stimulating medicine should be exhibited by the mouth to bring on the uterine secretion, till the congestion, or the inflammatory excitement in the chest, be removed.

In the scrofulous habit, depositions of scrofulous lymph in different parts of the cellular substance of the lungs,—and in the leucophlegmatic temperament, the formation of small tumours, termed tubercles, are apt to take place during this state of morbid excitement, or congestion of blood-vessels of the lungs, laying the foundation of pulmonary consumption. The most active means should therefore be adopted to unload the vessels of the lungs, and to allay the irritation. To unload the vessels, from ten to twenty ounces of blood (according to the temperament of the patient) may be taken by cupping, either from the lowermost part of the back or from the thighs;—

blood taken from these parts will have the same effect, in unloading the vessels of the lungs, as if taken from the chest, and by producing a determination towards the uterus, may, as I have already observed, prove beneficial in bringing on its natural periodical discharge. Blistering the skin, on the principle of derivation, by producing a determination of blood and nervous energy to another part, will be proper; and for the reasons I have given for abstracting blood from the lowermost part of the back or the thighs, I have always preferred applying a small blister to the inside of each thigh, just above the knee, to the usual places of the chest, and the favourable results have convinced me that a blister applied to the thigh or leg (a favourite practice with the most eminent physicians of France and Germany, in inflammatory affections of the lungs,) acts as a derivative, or, as it is generally termed, counter-irritant, as efficaciously, if not more so, than when applied over the seat of the disease. The bowels should be kept in a regular state, and occasionally purged by an aperient that will promote the circulation of blood in the bowels, such as the extract of

aloes. The objections made to saline aperients (page 18) apply to inflammatory affections of the lungs in this peculiar state of the system.

To allay the irritation in the lungs, two table-spoonsful of the following mixture may be taken three or four times a day, or whenever the cough is troublesome:—

Take of Emulsion of the bitter almond, 6 oz. ;
Gum arabic, powdered, 2 drachms ;
Oxymel of the hedge hyssop, 4
drachms.—Mix.

If the skin should be hot and dry, or the perspiration deficient, the vapour-bath should be employed every other day.

If the patient be of a sanguiferous temperament, or feverish habit, the diet should consist chiefly of arrow root, tapioca, the carragaheen moss, bread pudding, &c. ; but if of a leucophlegmatic habit, a little meat (underdone) once a day, will be proper. If, notwithstanding these means, the affection of the lungs should continue, recourse should be had to the inhalation of the chlorine gas,* as recom-

* The most simple, and the most efficacious mode of using this gas, is to pour an ounce of the dilute sulphuric

mended by Dr. Elliotson and others, in the sixth and seventh numbers of the *Monthly Gazette of Practical Medicine*. The jelly of the carragaheen, noticed in the same number, is in this case a most valuable nutritive and corrective article of diet. When the irritation of the lungs is subdued, or nearly so, and the system in a quiet state, or approaching it, the topical treatment by injection of hartshorn, (see page 23), or the application of the tourniquet or dry cupping, (see page 22), or electricity, (see page 22), should be employed to bring on the secretion of the uterus, as the most effectual means of preventing a recurrence of the inflammatory affection of the lungs, or rather pulmonary consumption, and of establishing the general health. A flannel chemise (to cover the chest and abdomen) should be worn next the skin, and also flannel drawers.

acid on half an ounce of the chloride of lime, in a saucer placed in the centre of the room, that the disengaged gas may be diffused throughout its atmosphere. Particular instructions for impregnating the air with this gas, and for inhaling it, are given in the seventh number of the *Monthly Gazette of Practical Medicine*.

I have given particular directions for the treatment of the inflammatory affection of the lungs, which so frequently takes place during the suspension of the natural periodical discharge of the uterus, because many thousand young women fall a sacrifice annually, in this country, to pulmonary consumption, in consequence of inattention to the affection of the lungs till serious organic disease has taken place.

A very common cause of retention of the menses, in this country, is compression of the spinal nerves leading to the womb, in consequence of distortion, or curvature, or disease of the spine. When irregularity of any portion of the vertebræ exists, a stimulating plaster, as the camphorated gum plaster, or the euphorbium plaster, applied over the loins, or friction, every night and morning, over the loins, with a stimulating liniment, as the following, I have found a powerful auxiliary to the pills, &c. recommended page 19.

Take of Olive oil, 1 ounce;

Spirit of turpentine, 2 drachms;

Liquor of ammonia, 3 drachms.—Mix.

In this case, electric sparks applied to the loins for ten minutes daily have had a very happy effect; but the means for removing the cause, recommended by Dr. Harrison, in the first, the third, the fourth, the sixth, and the seventh numbers of the *Monthly Gazette of Practical Medicine*, should be adopted.

Another cause, and certainly by no means an uncommon one in this country, of retention of the menses, is tight lacing. The bad effects of this practice, on the health of females, are fully pointed out by Mr. Tuson, an experienced surgeon of London, in the fifth number of the same work.

Dr. Miller, an eminent German physician, lately informed me that he had administered the tincture of iodine, in the dose of twenty-five drops, twice a day, in a wine-glassful of infusion of camomile flowers, in cases of retention of the uterine secretion, in scrofulous subjects, with great success. This article has also been successfully prescribed, in the same dose, by several eminent physicians and surgeons of this country, in cases of obstinate retention, after the general health had been

improved by treatment similar to that I have recommended. In very irritative or inflammatory habits it has acted injuriously, by disordering the stomach, and accelerating the circulation. When the mesenteric glands are obstructed, it is likely to prove beneficial. The dose is from ten to forty drops, in a wine-glass of a simple mucilaginous vehicle, as the decoction of marshmallow root, linseed tea, or barley water. The common practice is to commence with the dose of ten drops two or three times a day, and to increase it two drops every other day till it arrives to thirty or forty drops. It should never be carried to such an extent as to produce nausea.

The saturated tincture of the ergot of rye has also been successfully administered in this country, in the dose of from forty to sixty drops, twice a day, in a small wine-glassful of a weak infusion of savine, in cases of retention and of suppression of the menses.

The extract of the foetid chenopody, (*atriplex foetida*,) made by inspissating the fresh juice *in vacuo*, in the dose of ten grains, three times a day, dissolved in an ounce of pennyroyal water, is, with Dr. Sigmond,

Dr. Epps, Mr. Tuson, and many other eminent practitioners, a very favourite remedy for retention. This article, it is said, acts specifically on the uterus, so as to bring on the periodical secretion without exciting irritation. Dr. Cullen, speaking of the antihysterical properties of this plant, expresses regret that it is not more generally employed.

The tincture of strychnine, with the alkaline solution of iron, has also been highly recommended as a remedy for green sickness, or advanced retention of the menses; but as this combination, injudiciously given, is capable of doing much serious mischief, it should be administered only under the superintendence of an experienced practitioner.

The compound tincture of savine, in the dose of a tea-spoonful or two twice a day, in a little pennyroyal tea, is a common popular remedy, both for retention and suppression of the menses, and in languid habits it often succeeds. To a dose of this article some physicians add a tea-spoonful of the tincture of black hellebore, which is, no doubt, very likely to promote its effects on the uterus. Hooper's pills, and the Widow Welch's female pills, two

popular remedies for retention and suppression of the menses, containing steel, have been productive of very serious mischief, when the system is feverish or plethoric, and the lungs or brain in a state of inflammatory excitement. When the system is leucophlegmatic, or the circulation languid, they may prove serviceable.

The reader must bear in mind, that before any supposed specific remedy or topical means be employed, the general health should be put into such a state that the retention may be in a great measure, if not entirely, a local complaint.

It is common for parents to suppose that a female should not enter the matrimonial state so long as her general health is clearly suffering from retention of the menses. Females in this state are as likely to breed as those who have menstruated; and, when they become pregnant, their general health always improves. We have known chlorotic girls marry, and not to menstruate till they had ceased to breed, in consequence of being constantly pregnant or having a child at the breast; and when they ceased to breed, the monthly secretion came on regularly, and the general health was firmly established. Retention of the menses,

although the lungs may be in a state of morbid excitement, with symptoms of incipient consumption, should not therefore be considered by parents as an objection to matrimony.

There is a variety of *retention* of the menses which occurs even when the uterus performs its secretion. Although the secretion takes place monthly, in consequence of the external orifice of the vagina being completely closed by a perfect hymen, it is retained in the vagina, and in the course of nine or ten months the accumulation is so considerable as to distend the uterus to a size as to produce the external appearance of pregnancy. A very remarkable case of this kind some years since occurred in the family of a very respectable merchant in the Borough. A young lady, about eighteen years of age, exhibited the exterior symptoms of pregnancy. The abdomen was considerably enlarged, the breasts tumefied, and the stomach disordered. The menstrual secretion not having appeared externally, the surgeon intimated a suspicion of pregnancy. On examining the abdomen, he was satisfied the enlargement was occasioned by a distended uterus. The poor girl was accordingly taxed with pregnancy, and, in

consequence of her positively denying it, Dr. Denman and Dr. Osborne were consulted, who, after examination of the abdomen, the breasts, and particularly the areola of the nipples, did not hesitate to confirm the opinion of the surgeon. The poor girl was, of course, much affected by this opinion, but she still persisted in declaring its impossibility. Her solemn protestations of innocence, in the opinion of her parents, added to the crime. To avoid the disgrace of confinement in her parents' house, she was sent into the country to be delivered. In the course of two months, the uterus not admitting of further distension, came into action, and pains, resembling labour-pains, coming on, the attendance of the surgeon in the neighbourhood was requested. After waiting a few pains, the surgeon thought proper to ascertain the state of the labour, when he found a curious kind of tumour formed at the mouth of the vagina. On further examination he found the external covering to be a perfect hymen, a decisive proof of virginity. The surgeon, who had till then supposed she was really pregnant, not having heard that she had denied being in that state,

exclaimed — “ Why, my dear madam, it is impossible *you* can be in the family way.” He then divided the membrane with a common lancet, when the menstrual secretion rapidly escaped, to the extent of four quarts. The effect of the result of this case on the minds of her parents, brothers, and sisters, may be conceived by an affectionate parent, but cannot be described. During her banishment from her family, the conviction that she was not in the state in which her medical attendants had declared her to be, kept up her spirits; and, although she anticipated a fatal termination of her affliction, still she was happy that the result must satisfy her parents that she was not capable of attempting to conceal a crime, although of so great a magnitude, by falsehood. After this she enjoyed good health.

In the chapter on “ Virginitv ” I shall give a description of the hymen, with remarks on the prevailing popular opinion that its presence is necessary to establish the virginity of a suspected female, an opinion that has rendered many thousand virtuous females miserable for life.

SUPPRESSION OF THE MENSES.

THE periodical discharge from the womb being seldom regularly established for some years, and the periods of recurrence often varying, in different constitutions from two to three weeks, every interruption or suspension for a few weeks, is not to be considered a case of suppression. Until to the age of thirty, the suspension of the menses is therefore to be regarded of the nature of the "retention," noticed page 15, and subjected to the same treatment.

The cases of suspension of the discharge to which the name of "*suppression*" is given, are those which occur after the discharge has *regularly* returned for some years, and which are not occasioned by the common causes of retention, but generally imputable to some local affection of the uterus, as debility or restriction of its vessels. It is sometimes the consequence of general debility of the system; but, in such cases, it is merely symptomatic.

A suppression of the menstrual discharge seldom continues many weeks, without occasioning disorder in some part of the body, either from general plethora or local congestion. Sometimes the determination of blood to the stomach or lungs is so considerable as to rupture a blood vessel; hence females are subject to vomiting of blood, and to hemorrhage from the lungs (hemoptoe), and from the rectum (generally termed internal piles), which is not followed by the serious mischief which generally takes place in males after such occurrence, and on this account is regarded by eminent practitioners as a "*vicarious discharge*." When the determination to the brain is so considerable as to rupture a vessel, the consequence is apoplexy.

The treatment of suppression of the menses must be regulated according to the temperament. If the patient be of a plethoric habit, abstraction of blood, and an active purgative will be necessary; after which the warm hipbath every evening, at the temperature of 98, or sitting over the vapour of warm water, with a table-spoonful of the spirit of hartshorn in it,

generally succeeds in bringing on the secretion; if it should not, a quarter of a pint of camphorated julep, or pennyroyal tea, at the same temperature, may also be thrown up the vagina, by means of Read's female syringe. If the heat of the body should exceed 100, with a dry skin, the vapour bath, once a day, will be proper. In all cases of suppression, costiveness should be avoided, and such an aperient medicine employed that will promote the circulation in the viscera of the abdomen, as the extract of aloes; but if, on the contrary, the bowels be in too loose a state, a common cause of suppression, the evacuations should be checked by the following mixture, with a diet consisting chiefly of rice, arrow root, Scotch broth, &c.:—

Take of Lime water, 6 ounces;

Tincture of cinnamon, 1 ounce;

Tincture of opium, from 20 to 30 drops.—Mix.

Three table-spoonsful to be taken three, or four, or five times a day, according to the frequency of the motions.

When the patient is of a leucophlegmatic habit, and the circulation of the blood languid, a mild tonic medicine, as the tincture of the chirayita, with the carbonate of ammonia, may be taken in the following proportions:—

Take of Tincture of chirayita, 2 ounces;
Liquor of subcarbonate of ammonia,
3 drachms. — Mix.

Two table-spoonsful to be taken three times a day. If the bowels be sluggish, a tea-spoonful of the tincture of black hellebore, or of the compound tincture of savine, or of the tincture of *hiera picra*, may be added to each or every other dose of this mixture, so as to obviate costiveness.

Although the suppression is greatly dependant on debility, the local or immediate cause is preternatural constriction of the vessels of the uterus, or of the substance of the uterus itself; and therefore it would be highly improper to employ a powerful astringent tonic, as the rhatany root, Peruvian bark, preparations of steel, &c. &c. The general health

being improved, and the digestive organs invigorated by the above treatment, the hip-bath, at the temperature of 96 or 98, with injections of warm water into the vagina, at the time of using it, will probably succeed in removing the local cause.

When the suppression is the consequence of general debility, as indicated by general lassitude, paleness of the skin, coldness, or œdematous swelling of the legs, a sense of bearing down of the uterus on standing or walking, a slimy discharge from the vagina, a direct tonic treatment will be necessary. In this case, two or three tea-spoonsful of the following composition may be taken three times a day, in a wineglass of water :—

Take of Tincture of the round leaf cornel,
3 ounces ;

Alcaline liquor of iron, 1 ounce.

If the secretion of urine be deficient in quantity, the above mixture may be taken in a wine-glassful of infusion of the buchu leaves, or juniper berries, or of weak gin and water. If the uterine secretion should not come on

when the general health is very much improved, or nearly restored to its natural standard by the above plan, the treatment recommended for retention of the menses (p. 22) should be adopted.

The diet, in all cases of suppression of the menses, should, like medicine, be regulated by the state of the system. When the patient is of a full habit, and local congestion exists, a low diet should be adopted, and all stimulating articles avoided. When the system is in an opposite state, a nutritious diet, with a prudent use of wine, or diluted spirit, as gin or brandy, will be proper. When the suppression is the consequence of general debility, meat (as the inside of roasted or boiled mutton and beef,) may be taken two or three times a day; moderate exercise, particularly on horseback, by amusing the mind, promoting digestion, and shaking the abdominal viscera, is a powerful auxiliary to the means recommended above. The menses generally ceasing during pregnancy, the remedies we have recommended for suppression should not be employed, if there be present any symptom strongly indicating impregnation. (*See*

remarks on the suspension of the menstrual discharge, as an indication of pregnancy, p. 6, *et seq.*) Active means should not be employed to bring on the secretion, if the suppression takes place after the age of thirty-five, because, at that period, it frequently ceases, particularly in weakly or nervous habits, and in those who menstruated at an early period, unless the system is evidently suffering from the want of the secretion. When the suppression has been preceded by irregularity in its recurrence, or by a gradual decrease in the quantity, it would be more prudent to unload the system by bleeding and purging, and a low diet, than by employing means to bring on the discharge. (*See Cessation of the Menses.*)

Suppression of the menses is sometimes the consequence of organic disease of the uterus, and in such case the cause would be aggravated by attempting any stimulating means (general or local) to re-establish the evacuation. (*See Scirrhus of the Womb.*)

Dr. Charles M. Clarke, after expatiating on the absurdity of recommending specific remedies, or any particular mode of treating suppression of the menses, makes the following

very judicious remarks: — “ Cases of suppressed menses having been regarded as arising from debility of the system, or of the vessels of the womb, it is too frequently the practice to resort, in *all* cases, *indiscriminately* to the same supposed means of relief, as some preparation of steel, gum resins, as balsam copaiba, irritating purgatives, and cantharides. No disease admits of being treated so generally; even the most simple complaint, from the state of the constitution, or peculiarity or stage of the malady, requires different and often opposite modes of management; for instance, the application of brimstone to the skin, for the cure of the itch, will, on some, excite inflammation, and on others have no such effect. If there are cases of obstructed or suppressed menses, where the fluid is tardily secreted, in consequence of general or local debility, there are many others in which an opposite state of the frame becomes the cause. The reason is obvious: the secretion of menstruation, like the other secretions of the body, is of course best performed when the system is in a state of health. Now health is not constituted by an *excess* of fulness, or by

the performance of violent actions, any more than by debility or enfeebled action ; consequently the exhibition of stimulants will not influence the secretion of the uterus, unless attention be given to the restoration of the general health, even in cases of debility ; still less will such a mode of treatment be applicable to cases of interrupted menstruation occurring in plethoric habits, where the presence of the fulness itself is the cause of the interruption of the due performance of the natural secretion. Instead, then, of resorting to such measures, let the morbid peculiarities of the constitution, and the habits of life of the patient, be taken into consideration ; let the first be counteracted, the second improved ; let the plethoric have her excess of fulness diminished, let the debilitated have her powers augmented ; in short, let the general health be amended, and the various functions of the body will be restored."

In plethoric subjects, and sometimes in persons of languid or leucophlegmatic habits, inflammatory piles, (internal or external), with considerable bleeding, is a cause of suspension of the uterine secretion. When the discharge

of blood from internal or external piles takes place monthly at the period of life when the discharge naturally ceases, I think no topical means, as astringent injections, &c. should be adopted, unless the quantity of blood is so considerable as to induce great debility. In general, the quantity from piles, in such cases, decreases gradually every month, and the cessation is not followed by any local malady or disturbance of the general health; but when the discharge of blood from piles recurs periodically a few years before the usual period of cessation of the menses, *i. e.* between the time it became established and the age of thirty-five, means should be employed to prevent the escape of blood from the piles, and to produce a determination to the uterus. For the latter purpose, I have given directions, page 22, *et seq.*; for the former, about the size of a large nutmeg of the following ointment may be rubbed externally, (round the anus,) every night and morning, and introduced into the rectum, every night and morning, by besmearing thickly the end of a wax candle, (about the size of the thumb,) or an elastic rectum bougie:—

Take of Flowers of zinc, 2 drachms ;
Prepared calomel, 1 drachm ;
Ointment of elderflower, 1 oz.—Mix.

If this ointment should not have the desired effect, and the hæmorrhoidal vessels should be much distended, a quarter of a pint of the decoction of oak bark, or of pomegranate rind, or of logwood, may be injected (cold) into the rectum twice a day, and applied externally three or four times a day, by means of folded old linen or lint, secured by the usual bandage. The bougie, besides conveying the ointment to the seat of the disease in the rectum, acts very beneficially, by compressing the distended vessels, both in cases of external and internal piles; and on this account it should remain in the rectum half an hour or an hour, if it should not excite much irritation. If the patient be of a plethoric habit, and the vessels of the head should become overloaded, as indicated by giddiness, head-ache, distention of the vessels of the eyes, flushing, pain in the loins, &c. (see page 56,) it will be better to take blood from a vein or veins of a foot, or by cupping the thighs, than to allow the

discharge of blood from the piles to continue. If the intestines should not be sufficiently relieved every day, five or ten grains of the alkaline extract of jalap, or a tea-spoonful or two of the artificial Harrowgate salt, dissolved in a small tumbler of cheese whey or water, may be taken every or every other day, to keep the bowels in a regular state, not to purge, as frequent evacuations generally aggravate the affection of the rectum. This treatment I have found very efficacious, in cases of external and internal, or, what is generally termed, blind piles; and it has this great advantage, that in case the internal piles be attended with structural disease in the coats of the rectum, or stricture, it will not aggravate it. At the age of forty to sixty, the rectum is disposed to structural mischief; and when there is a considerable discharge of mucus or slime, and acute pain on passing hard fæces, or when much exertion is necessary to empty the rectum, particularly if the irritation extends to the bladder, it will be necessary to ascertain if the affection of the rectum be internal piles or stricture, or any other disease in which some more

active mechanical means, or other remedies, may be necessary.

If the health should not rapidly improve under this tonic treatment, it is probable some obstruction or sluggishness exists, either in the substance of the liver, the coats of the stomach, or in the uterus; to remove which, four grains of the blue pill may be administered every night for a week. In regard to the proper period for the employment of a local remedy to bring on the uterine secretion, if it should not take place when the general health is raised to its natural standard, the observations and instructions I have introduced, page 40, *et seq.* equally apply to cases of suppression.

The cold hip-bath, or cold ablution by means of the bidet, immersion of the feet in cold water, (a common practice with ladies in the higher circles,) and the use of an abdominal bandage, by compressing the descending aorta and the blood vessels of the viscera of the abdomen, are not only common causes of suppression of the menses, but, after the age of forty, of apoplexy, or spitting or vomiting of blood. A frequent cause of suppression, as

well as retention of the menses, is compression of the spinal nerves leading to the uterus from some irregularity in the vertebral column, enlargement or disease in the vertebræ, or disease or compression of the spinal marrow by effused serum. The effects of distortion, or curvature of the spine, on the uterine system have been particularly noticed by Dr. Harrison, in the six first numbers of the *Monthly Gazette of Practical Medicine*, and also in his late valuable publication *On the real Causes and successful Treatment of Sterility in both Sexes*.

When suppression of the menses is the consequence of irregularity, or disease in the spine, the treatment recommended for retention, from the same causes, page 31, should be adopted.

I have met with a few cases of suppression of the menses of long standing, in persons between the ages of twenty-five and thirty, attended with a chronic inflammation, evidently of an erysipelatous nature, extending from the external orifice of the vagina to the neck of the uterus, and probably over the internal surface of the uterus. This complaint is attended with peculiar dryness and

a sense of great heat in the vagina, a most distressing itching of the external parts, and general disturbance of the nervous system. In the treatment of this complaint I have succeeded by persevering in the use of an alterative injection, as the following, with the occasional exhibition of the blue pill and a sedative, periodical dry cupping, and attention to the stomach and intestines:—

Take of Prepared calomel, 2 drachms;

Gum arabic, 4 drachms;

Extract of henbane, half a drachm;

Elder-flower water, 12 oz. — Mix.

About an ounce to be thrown gently into the vagina, by means of the female elastic syringe, (with an elastic gum pipe,) three times a day. Four grains of the blue pill, with two grains of the extract of hemlock, may be taken every night for a week. Three table-spoonsful of a solution of nitrate of potass, in an infusion of buchu leaves, (in the proportion of two drachms of the former to eight ounces of the latter,) may be taken three times a day.

I have preferred dry cupping, because in

every case the patients were not plethoric, probably in consequence of their general health having been reduced by the long continuance of the malady. Dry cupping the thighs proves beneficial, by occasioning a determination of blood in the direction of the uterus. If the system should be plethoric, or if it be in a state to admit of the loss of blood, without inducing considerable debility, it will be advisable to apply the scarificator two, three, or four times, according to the state of the sanguiferous system, or degree of febrile excitement of the body.

As an aperient, in case the bowels should be confined, castor oil, with thirty drops of the balsam copaiba, or two drops of essential oil of buchu leaves, or of cubebs, I have found to answer much better than the saline purgatives, or the aperient medicines in common use.

The hip-bath, at the temperature of 85, has always a very soothing effect in this variety; but at a temperature above 90, it generally aggravates the most distressing symptoms, (heat and itching.)

The diet should consist of mild bland food,

i. e. free from stimulants, as the rabbit, fowl, fish, arrow root, gruel, &c.

Sometimes suppression, as well as retention of the menses, depends on original formation, or rather slight malformation. In the *Edinburgh Journal* a very remarkable case of retention was lately published, in which the ovaria were deficient. It is also a curious fact, that those ladies of masculine stature, and even masculine manners, are very subject to suppression of the menses; and although very robust, generally have it in very small quantity. They also rarely become pregnant.

EXCESSIVE MENSTRUATION.

WHEN the uterine secretion (menses) is so unusually frequent, or continues for so long a period, or is so abundant, as to induce considerable debility, it is regarded *morbidly* excessive; but when the system is in a plethoric state, and the powers of the system are

not diminished, but the general health improved by an excessive discharge, it is to be considered salutary.

A morbid excess of the periodical secretion is of an *active* and of a *passive* kind, *i. e.* arising from general plethora, or preternatural determination of blood to the womb, in a system bordering on general plenitude, and also from relaxation of the vessels of the uterus. The former occurs in the sanguineous, and the latter in the leucophlegmatic temperament. An excessive discharge is not only symptomatic of opposite states of the system, but of different morbid affections of the uterus itself; as tumefaction of the neck, or thickening of the walls of the uterus; ulceration; tumours, as polypus; excrescence, as the cauliflower, &c. When the complaint is active, *i. e.* excessive discharge is the consequence of general plethora, it is, for the most part, preceded by giddiness, confusion of the head, flushings of the face, oppression of the chest, irregular action of the heart, pains in the loins, a mucous discharge from the vagina, internal or external piles, which gradually decrease after the discharge has commenced. In this case

no constitutional or topical means should be employed to check it, unless the powers of the system are evidently much reduced by it. It should be considered only in proportion to the overloaded state of the system of blood vessels, and chiefly treated by rest, and a bland diet, free from stimulants. If cold applications to the lower part of the bowels, or astringent injections be employed before the system be sufficiently unloaded, an afflux of blood, either to the brain, lungs, or the bowels, will probably take place, which, in persons predisposed to apoplexy, disease of the lungs or bowels, is not unfrequently followed by very serious consequences. By the common practice of using the cold hip-bath, or of cold water in a bidet, or immersing the feet in cold water, with the view of preventing an excessive discharge, in plethoric subjects, without previously having recourse to abstraction of blood, very serious affections of the head, chest, and abdomen, or of the uterus itself, or of the rectum or bladder, have been produced. It is assuredly desirable, even in a person of a very full habit of body, to prevent an excess of the periodical discharge, because when it has been allowed

to continue regularly for many months, particularly after the age of thirty, organic disease is very apt to take place in the neck, or some other part of the uterus; but the excess should be prevented by removing the cause, *i. e.* by abstracting a quantity of blood from a vein, so as to reduce the state of the circulation to its natural standard, and a recurrence of plethora, obviated by a low diet and exercise. After the age of thirty or thirty-five, blood taken from a vein, in quantity proportioned to the plethoric state of the system, or the habits of the patient, is much more beneficial than when abstracted by cupping, or by leeches, probably because, after that period, venous plethora prevails. When the excessive discharge has so considerably reduced the powers of the body, as to induce fainting, &c., the same means should be adopted to check it as I shall recommend for the passive kind, *i. e.* for excessive discharge from general debility or relaxation. When an excessive discharge is clearly the consequence of general debility, or relaxation of the system, or a want of contractile power in the secerning extremities of the arteries of the

internal surface of the uterus, (in which case the patient is generally affected with fluor albus, a sense of bearing down of the uterus on standing or walking, paleness of the skin, swelling of the legs towards night, or on taking much exercise or standing, want of appetite, considerable production of gas in the stomach and intestines, lowness of spirits, &c.) a powerful tonic should be administered to invigorate the system, and attention should be paid to the intestinal canal, so as to obviate constipation, or to check diarrhœa. As a tonic medicine, I have found the following composition very efficacious:—

Take of Infusion of roses of the London Pharmacopœia, 6 ounces;
Tincture of the round leaf cornel, 1 oz.
— Mix.

Three table-spoonsful to be taken three times a day. If the bowels should not be sufficiently relieved every day, one or two of the following pills may be taken every or every other night or morning, according to their effect:—

Take of The alkaline extract of rhubarb,
1 drachm;

Oil of cinnamon, 6 drops. — Mix
well together, and divide into
fifteen pills.

If the bowels should be in too loose a state,
three table-spoonsful of the following mixture
may be taken three or four times a day:—

Take of Lime water, 6 ounces;

Compound tincture of rhatany,

Tincture of cinnamon, of each 1 oz.

—Mix.

These medicines should be continued for some weeks, with the view of removing the cause of the excessive discharge, viz. general debility. A corresponding diet should be adopted, as meat twice a day, with such vegetables as the patient has found to agree with the stomach. The inside of roasted or boiled mutton and beef, when well masticated, I have found in general to agree with the stomach. The best beverage is port wine, or good sound porter, and occasionally a little weak brandy

and water. When the discharge is evidently becoming excessive, cloths moistened with vinegar should be applied (cold) over the abdomen, and particularly the lowermost part, and to the loins. If this should not succeed, a large wine-glassful of the following lotion should be thrown up the vagina (cold) two or three times a day, according to the degree of discharge, by means of the female syringe:—

Take of Alum, 3 drachms ;

Rose water, a pint.

The foregoing modes of treatment are recommended for two varieties of excessive discharge; the first from general fulness, or in systems in which the vital powers are running too high, and the second from debility; or when the system is in an opposite state, *i. e.* when debility or relaxation prevails, attended with considerable diminution of the vital powers, without any structural or organic mischief, either in the body or neck of the womb. When organic disease, or when tumours or excrescences exist, great nicety of practice is generally necessary, particularly

in regard to the adoption of remedies, either to check the discharge or to invigorate the system, which I shall endeavour to point out in the chapters on these diseases.

When the excessive discharge is clearly the consequence of debility, as indicated by general relaxation of the muscular system, particularly of the abdomen, calves of the legs, the skin, languid circulation, coldness of the extremities, it is of great importance to support the bowels by a bandage which will gently compress them from below upwards. Among the remedies which have been recommended to check excessive discharge of the menstrual fluid from debility, or when the system is sinking under it, are the tincture of the ergot of rye, in the dose of two tea-spoonsful, three times a day, in a glass of water; the tincture of the gum kino, in the dose of two tea-spoonsful, in a wine-glass of the infusion of roses; a desert-spoonful of the tincture of rhatany root, three or four times a day, in a wine-glassful of the infusion of roses. Ipecacuan powder, in the dose of two or three grains, so as to excite slight nausea, without vomiting, Dr. Murray and M. Dahlberg have found very beneficial.

This remedy should be administered with great caution; for Dr. Cullen says he met with a case in which it excited a degree of vomiting, which increased the discharge to an extent as to endanger life. When the complaint first occurs about the age of forty, or between forty and fifty, attended with clots, acute pain in the loins, or the region of the uterus, shooting pains in the breasts, and nausea, followed by a slimy discharge, continuing more or less till the uterine secretion recurs; the probable cause is, either some organic disease in the body or neck of the womb, or of tumours or excrescences; in which cases the discharge, although it may induce general debility, may prove beneficial, by checking the progress of the disease of which it is the consequence. (*See* Fleshy Tumours, and Polypus of the Womb; *also*, Schirrus and Cancer of the Womb.

Females of a plethoric temperament, or who are, in fact, not leucophlegmatic, subject to excessive menstruation, should live abstemiously, avoid stimulants, as wine or spirits, and much exercise; and those of a languid constitution should adopt a generous diet, take a glass or

two of port wine immediately after dinner, and should take gentle exercise. In both cases a mattress should be used instead of a feather bed. Constipation should, in both instances, be obviated by a mild aperient, as the following:—

Take of Alcaline extract of jalap,

————— extract of rhubarb, of each
1 drachm;

Oil of carraway seeds, 12 drops.—

Mix; and divide into thirty pills.

One, two, or three to be taken every or every other night, so as to obviate costiveness. Purging is improper.

The reader must bear in mind that it is not every inequality in the quantity of the secretion, or irregularity in its recurrence, that is to be considered a disease, and that when it is in excess, it is only to be checked when the powers of the system are evidently much reduced by it.

Congestion of the blood vessels of the uterus, a very common immediate cause of excessive menstruation, even when the system is not in a plethoric state, is often occasioned by languid

circulation of the blood, and diminished nervous energy in the lower extremities. Females who suffer from an excessive discharge should therefore be very particular in keeping their legs and feet warm, by wearing worsted stockings, or flannel socks, with horse-hair soles.

The baneful influence of emotions of the mind on the uterine secretion is very remarkable. In plethoric subjects, sudden joy, or any of the stimulating passions, will bring it on, and, when it has taken place, will considerably increase it; whilst on others, who are apparently of the same constitution, it will suspend and check it, after it has occurred. The depressing passions, particularly grief, keep up a languid discharge, under which the system often rapidly sinks, or disease takes place in the substance or neck of the uterus. Many thousands of females, of acute sensibility of feelings, have been hurried to the grave by the effects of mental uneasiness on the uterus, in consequence of the cruel conduct of their husbands. If a member of the profession, who has been in extensive practice in London many years, were to publish all the extraordinary cases of this kind that occurred,

what an appalling picture of frail humanity would he exhibit!!! Many thousand delicate females annually fall a sacrifice, in this metropolis, to the effects of mental uneasiness, who so far concealed the real state of their minds from their friends, as to lead them to believe that they were among the happiest of the happy ; when the vital powers were gradually sinking under the influence of the most poignant sorrow.

————— “ Oh, it is excellent
To have a giant's strength, but tyrannous
To use it like a giant.”

————— “ Merciful Heaven !
Thou rather, with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt,
Splitst the unconquerable and gnarled oak
Than the soft myrtle. Oh ! but man, proud man !
Dressed in a little brief authority,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven
As make the angels weep.”

During the discharge of my professional duties, often have I seen ladies, who were apparently in the enjoyment of every comfort the world is capable of affording, after noticing a few nervous symptoms, make observations similar to the following, evidently in allusion

to some neglect or other cruel conduct they experience from their husbands: — “You can do me no good, unless indeed you possess the preternatural power to

—— “Minister to a mind diseased;
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
Raze out the troubles of the brain;
And, with some sweet oblivious antidote,
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart.”

DEFICIENCY OF THE MENSTRUAL DISCHARGE.

MANY disorders, particularly of the head, the heart, the stomach, and the uterine system, being common consequences of deficiency of the menstrual secretion, I have thought proper to introduce a chapter on it. In determining whether the discharge is really deficient, the state of the health, particularly in regard to general or local fulness, and also the appearance or quality of the discharge, must be taken into consideration. If the patient be of a leuco-

phlegmatic or very debilitated habit, and the discharge pale, the quantity, although small, or even what is generally termed a mere show, is as much as nature can afford; and on improving the general health, by the means I have recommended for suppression of the menses, page 42, will increase in quantity.

In a healthy person, after the system has arrived to its full growth, till within three or four years of the period the secretion is about to cease, the quantity that escapes is from five to seven or eight ounces. In sanguineous temperament, it is, as I have already observed, not to be considered excessive, when it exceeds twelve or sixteen ounces, provided the powers of the system are not reduced by it, or, in other words, when it is in proportion to the plethoric condition of the constitution; so in the leucophlegmatic habit, or very debilitated subject, it is not to be regarded as a case of deficiency, when the discharge does not exceed three or four ounces. We are not to determine whether it be a case of paucity or of excess, more by the quality than the quantity; and hence, when the discharge is copious, and very pale, *i. e.* consisting chiefly of serum, it

is still to be considered as a case of paucity; and, on the contrary, when the discharge is thick, very red, with clots, and it has a debilitating effect, although the quantity may not exceed six or seven ounces, it is to be considered, particularly in a weakly person, a case of excess.

We are not to form an opinion merely from the length of time the discharge has continued, for this, in different constitutions, varies from two to six days. In general, females of lax and delicate constitutions have a more copious and continued discharge than the robust, whilst with those of an opposite state of constitution, whose fibres are rigid, and whose habits and exterior appearances are more masculine than feminine, the quantity is generally very small, and it seldom continues longer than two or three days. In these cases the discharge is to be considered constitutional or natural. The discharge is to be considered deficient in quantity, when the system is not sufficiently unloaded or relieved by it, *i. e.* when the symptoms of plethora, as headach, giddiness, oppression of the chest, &c. in a full habit, which are generally relieved by a

proper discharge, continue, and the secretion is unusually small. A deficiency, as well as retention of the menses, is sometimes the consequence of the ovaria being either imperfect or absent, in which case the system does not suffer either from retention, suppression, or deficiency. A very interesting case of deficiency of the ovaria was sometime since published in the *Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal*. Congestion of the vessels of the brain, by diminishing the nervous energy, and of the vessels of the lungs, impeding the action of the heart, in plethoric subjects, is a very common cause of paucity of the monthly secretion, and in either case the discharge is increased by abstraction of blood from a vein.

A common cause of paucity of the uterine secretion is compression of the spinal nerves leading to the uterine system, from irregularity or disease in the spinal column or of the spinal marrow, by effused serum, several interesting cases of which have been lately published by Dr. Harrison, who has, for many years, paid particular attention to the effect of distortion or curvature of the spine on the uterus, and on the general health of females.

Another cause of paucity of the periodical secretion of the uterus is the practice, very common in this country, of ablution with cold water, by means of the bidet, and immersion of the feet in cold water, immediately after quitting the bed. The injurious tendencies of this practice I have noticed, pages 51 and 57. Ablution is necessary, but in warm water. Languid circulation in the extremities, from want of exercise, or the use of thin stockings and tight lacing, is also a common cause of a deficiency of the secretion. Paucity, as well as an excess of the secretion, is a common attendant on barrenness; the former from an indolent state of the uterus, and the latter from laxity or want of energy. When barrenness is attended with a paucity of the secretion, it is of great importance to invigorate the uterine system, so as to increase the discharge, by the means recommended, page 41, for suppression of the menses. After the discharge has been increased by such means, the female is very apt to become impregnated. Many nervous diseases, particularly mania, asthma, and Saint Vitus's dance, being increased by excessive secretion of the uterus,

and by uterine irritation, such remedies, in nervous subjects, and particularly those predisposed to mania, asthma, Saint Vitus's dance, and other nervous affections, should be used with great caution.

CESSATION OF THE MENSES.

THIS is the most critical period of the female life, and must be attended to with great care, as the future health depends in a great degree on the manner in which the system is regulated at this time. The final disappearance of the menses is generally preceded by a temporary suppression, continuing perhaps for two or three months, followed by an increased and unusually long-continued discharge. The latter will sometimes recur at very short intervals, and in profuse quantities, leaving, when absent, a whitish mucous discharge, which is vulgarly termed the *whites*. This increased evacuation is not always attended with proportionate debility, nor is the temporary

suppression accompanied with much inconvenience. But after a little time, all the symptoms of plethora or general fulness of the vessels appear; as giddiness; pains in the head, side, and back, shortness of breathing, and a general sense of oppression. The womb is now very apt to take on diseased action, from any irritating causes; and from its sympathizing in a peculiar manner with many other organs of the body, particularly the breasts and stomach, diseases of those parts are very apt to ensue. The general circle of sympathetic action also between the brain and this and other organs, is broken or interrupted when the peculiar functions of the womb cease, and many painful nervous affections ensue in consequence; hysterical diseases also frequently arise from the same causes.

It will be particularly necessary to guard against too great a fulness of the system, by abstraction of blood, if requisite; restriction in diet, according to previous habits; and to be careful to keep the bowels open. From neglecting these measures, various diseases frequently ensue, as affections of the liver and lungs, and sometimes apoplexy. But as

this is so critical a period, and the symptoms which arise are so various in different constitutions, and require such different modes of treatment, we would advise that a medical practitioner should be consulted, should any unpleasant symptoms appear. Active purgatives will, however, in almost all cases be necessary: we therefore subjoin the following formula for pills to answer this purpose, which may be taken once or twice a week, according to circumstances:

Take of Compound extract of colocynth, 1
drachm;

Alcaline extract of rhubarb, $\frac{1}{2}$ ditto.

Castile soap, $\frac{1}{2}$ ditto.

Oil of caraway, 10 drops.—Mix, and
divide into thirty pills: three or four for a dose.

Females of a nervous temperament are at this period liable to a vast variety of symptoms which do not portend any organic change, but demand temporary relief; if this period be passed over without producing disease, the general health is often firmly established for a long series of years.

DISEASES OF PREGNANCY.

A REMARKABLE change takes place in the system after conception. It is from this source whence arise different symptoms that are, however, liable to considerable variation, not only in the constitution of different persons, but in the same person in different pregnancies.

Pregnancy, although a natural change in the animal economy, which every female seems originally formed to undergo, and therefore not to be considered a state of disease, is sometimes accompanied with various complaints which depend on it as a cause.

The complaints incident to the pregnant state may be considered either as arising from sympathy of other parts with the womb, in the early months; plethora; or the distension and pressure of the womb, towards the more advanced stages.

Various complaints, arising from the first-mentioned causes, make their appearance soon after conception, as sickness at the stomach, giddiness, and pains about the side. Though

these in a great measure depend on sympathy with the irritable state of the womb, yet in many constitutions they are much increased by too great a fulness of the blood-vessels, which in strong healthy women almost always accompanies this state of pregnancy. Small bleedings prudently and judiciously employed, will be attended with the most beneficial and salutary effects, particularly in young women suddenly affected with severe sickness, febrile commotion, headach, and giddiness; — this will be the most effectual and frequently the only means of preventing abortion.

When the stomach is much affected, accompanied with indigestion, or loaded with acrid matters, gentle vomiting should be excited by camomile tea, or a scruple of ipecacuanha powder. The state of the bowels should be carefully attended to, and when laxative medicines become necessary, those of the mildest kind should be employed, as rhubarb and magnesia, electuary of senna, or Epsom salts.

If vomiting only comes on in the morning, and if, after having rejected the contents of the stomach, no more inconvenience is felt during the day, it is of no importance; indeed

it is rather beneficial, as it serves in some degree to relieve the excitability of the womb, and prevent too great a fulness of the system. There is a species of vomiting which is constant, attended with pain in the stomach, and the patient is only at all easy when in a recumbent posture, and this kind of vomiting does not always go off at quickening.

Much may be done in this case by attending to the diet; it should be light and mild. We have known equal parts of milk and water with a toast in it, stay on the stomach when every thing else was rejected. And if only a few spoonfuls of this be taken every hour, it will be sufficient to support the patient. In cases in which there is too great a fulness of the system, this will be most effectually relieved by a small blood-letting, which may be repeated once or more if requisite.

In persons liable to nervous complaints, where the stomach is weak, and the digestion of the food is not well performed, a course of light aromatic and strengthening bitters should be taken, as camomile tea with a little ginger, two or three times a day, or an infusion of columba or gentian with the same;

and if there be much acidity in the stomach and bowels, a tea-spoonful of calcined magnesia may be added to each dose. Soda water prepared with the lemonated sodaic powders will be the best drink.

Heartburn is generally a troublesome symptom: this will also be removed by soda water or magnesia, which likewise have the beneficial effect of keeping the bowels open.

Depraved appetite is a frequent occurrence during pregnancy; and it is a very general opinion, that if women are not indulged in these longings they will give marks to the child, and many stories are told to that effect; but these may, in the greater number of instances, be considered as adventitious circumstances. If a child is born with any peculiar mark upon it, all those things that have been wished for during the state of pregnancy, are recalled to mind, and it is very odd, if, by the help of the imagination, it cannot be likened to something the mother has desired.

One of the most common occurrences is an obstinately costive state of the bowels, which is productive of much inconvenience: strong purgatives should not by any means be taken

to obviate this, but something gentle, so as to procure two or three stools every day.

Under some circumstances a relaxed state of the bowels accompanies pregnancy; this is seldom of importance. A spoonful of the cretaceous mixture of the pharmacopœia taken three or four times a day, will generally relieve it. Sometimes it arises from hardened fæces being collected in the bowels, which irritate them and occasion a bearing down and slimy discharge; this will be best relieved by castor oil and lavements. It is the custom in France for married ladies to provide themselves with a machine for using lavements, by which they can inject themselves;* and this they do every day during pregnancy; a practice that eminently tends to obviate some of the most troublesome symptoms of that state.

It is not unusual for there to be difficulty in making water; this may arise from the pressure of the womb against the neck of the bladder; in which case the patient will generally be able to pass the water tolerably well

* This most improved instrument may be procured at Read's, Surgical Instrument Maker, Regent Circus, and at the Medical Hall, 170, Piccadilly.

when lying on her back. Sometimes it arises from an irritable state of the bladder: this will be relieved by mucilaginous drinks and sedatives, as barley water, mucilage of gum arabic, or decoction of quince seeds, and, in some cases, two or three drops of the solution of acetate of morphine, twice a day. This symptom should be carefully attended to, as, when neglected, it may occasion a very serious accident, which is retroversion of the womb. This, as the name imports, is a tilting, or turning over of the womb, from the pressure of the over-distended bladder.

The nature and mode of treatment of this complaint were not understood until about fifty years ago, and if unrelieved it must for the most part terminate fatally. It can only take place before the fifth month of pregnancy, after which the womb has acquired such a size as to rise above the pelvis, when this accident cannot possibly happen. After a long continued suppression of urine, a tumour is found projecting into the back part of the vagina; there is then generally an impossibility to pass any urine, and a sense of weight and pressure about the fundament, with a

constant inclination to go to stool; pain, in general, soon comes on, accompanied with sickness and vomiting. No forcible attempts should be made to replace the womb; it will generally be effected by removing the cause — the distension of the bladder. The urine should be drawn off by the catheter, and it should never be allowed to accumulate in any considerable quantity. By this means, assisted by rest, low diet, and keeping the bowels in a lax state, the womb will soon recover its natural situation.

We do not think it proper to enter fully into the consideration of this case, as the assistance of a medical practitioner should be required. We have treated of it thus far, that patients may be aware of the nature of the complaint. Before we quit this subject, it is proper to remark, that a total stoppage of urine does not always take place; instances have occurred in which the patients have been able to pass some water, though not to empty the bladder.

It very often happens that the state of pregnancy is attended with a cough and difficulty of breathing; when it is accompanied with

symptoms of inflammation, bleeding and other depletory remedies should be employed. We sometimes find that women have a difficulty of breathing, with an oppression and uneasiness about the chest, and a small quick pulse; with these symptoms there is sometimes an effusion of water into the chest. Blisters will in these cases be very beneficial; aperient medicines should also be taken, and a teaspoonful of oxymel of squills in barley water, three or four times a day. The stomachic draught, page 97, recommended for fluor albus, will also be advisable. It will, however, in these cases, be prudent to obtain the advice of a medical practitioner.

Sometimes there is an acute pain in the side without cough; blood-letting will here be advisable. Occasionally a dull pain in the right side is experienced, with some uneasiness on lying on it; this arises from torpor of, and congestion in the liver, and is quickly relieved by active purgatives.

It very often happens that palpitations of the heart and tremblings occur, about the time of quickening; these are to be palliated by light cordials, as a glass of wine with a toast

in it, two or three times a day, or a few drops of sal-volatile, or from five to eight or ten drops of laudanum, once or twice a day. Obstinate nausea, and uneasiness about the stomach, without any particular symptoms of indigestion, will sometimes continue throughout the whole period of pregnancy; this will be best palliated by taking two or three, or four drops of the solution of acetate of morphine, in a glass of any simple aromatic water, two, three, or four times a day, as occasion may require.

Various pains are felt about different parts of the body, as toothach, pains in the face resembling *tic douloureux*, &c.: these will be most effectually relieved by blisters behind the ear, or near the affected part.

The above complaints principally arise from the state of plethora which accompanies pregnancy, and morbid irritability of the nervous system, from sympathy with the womb; there are others which are caused by the mechanical effects of the distended womb. One of the most troublesome is the disease called the piles. It may either arise from costiveness, or the pressure of the uterus on the trunks of the veins which return the blood from the lower

extremities of the intestines, termed the rectum; by this pressure the return of the blood through them is obstructed, they consequently become dilated, and form those tumours which constitute the disease. The most effectual means of relieving this complaint will be keeping the bowels regularly open, a light diet, and gentle regular exercise. The best topical applications are a decoction of oak bark, or pomegranate rind, two or three times a day. When they project externally, it will be advisable to apply spermaceti or elder ointment to them, which will prevent much uneasiness from friction. Where they are very large and painful, the patient should sit over the steam of warm water several times a day, and afterwards anoint them with cold cream or other cooling ointment.* Distension of the veins of the lower extremities is another effect from the pressure of the womb on the trunks of the veins which return the blood from them. In the early stage of this complaint it may be relieved by the application of rollers or laced

* In the 13th number of the "Gazette of Practical Medicine," will be found a very useful lecture on this subject, by Dr. Sigmond.

stockings, but if it has been of long standing this will be productive of pain ; it must then be alleviated as much as possible by keeping the legs resting upon a stool.

Cramp in the legs will be produced in the same manner by pressure on the nerves ; and dropsical swellings by pressure on the lymphatic vessels. These complaints will continue during the whole period of pregnancy, and can only be palliated by avoiding too great fulness of the system, and keeping the legs as much as possible in a horizontal position. Sometimes the external parts of the genitals become distended to an enormous size ; when this is the case, small punctures may be made with a lancet to let out the fluid ; but it will in general be better not to interfere with it. When it is accompanied with inflammation and itching of the parts, they should be frequently washed with cold water, and a fold of linen wetted with the following lotion may be applied :—

Take of Solution of Acetate of Lead, 1 drachm ;
Water, 1 pint ;
Alcohol, 1 ounce.—Mix.

Convulsive fits sometimes occur during pregnancy; but in these cases the assistance of a medical man should be required. There is a painful sensation in the bowels usually referred to the womb, but which is in reality an affection of that portion of the intestines called the colon, which traverses across the upper part of that organ.

ON ABORTION, OR MISCARRIAGE.

It is difficult to enumerate all the causes of abortion: some arise from the mother; of these may be mentioned—plethora; debility; violent agitations of the mind; injuries from falls, blows, and fatigue; and the intervention of some acute disease. Sometimes it arises from a particular state or disease of the womb, as great irritability, and debility and relaxation of that and the vagina; this is usually preceded by a mucous discharge from those parts. In some instances it seems to occur from a want of distensibility of the womb. A woman will

go to a certain period, and although she has been well until that time, she then becomes ill and miscarries; and this occurs at the same period in several successive pregnancies. In many cases it evidently arises from original imperfection of the ovum, or some fault in the attachment and distribution of different parts of it, particularly the attachment of the placenta over the orifice of the womb.

Miscarriages are always attended with some danger, particularly from excessive loss of blood. They are, likewise, hurtful, in consequence of the liability there always is to a recurrence of it when it has once happened.

The most usual period at which an abortion takes place, is ten weeks. When the habit is established, it occurs at the same period in every pregnancy; and if the patient can be got safely past that, she will then frequently go the full time.

The symptoms first observed are a discharge of blood from the vagina, at first slight, but usually, after a few days, becoming greater; pains then come on, and the ovum is at length expelled; but in general, a good deal of blood is lost before this takes place.

In some instances pain comes on in the first instance, but this is not usually the case. It is always advantageous when the pains come on early, as they tend to lessen the flooding, in every instance but one, which is when the placenta is attached over the orifice of the womb. It seldom happens that a woman miscarries without fainting frequently coming on ; it is, however, an advantageous thing, as it gives time for coagula to form in the mouths of the bleeding vessels.

The danger is always proportionate to the loss of blood, and the farther pregnancy is advanced, before the seventh month, the greater is the danger.

The treatment must depend on the state of the patient ; it must be varied according to whether there be plethora or debility, or if it be caused by fright, or a blow, or if it be the first time, or otherwise.

At one time it was the practice to bleed on the coming on of abortive symptoms, but the propriety of this practice must entirely depend on the state of the general system ; it is, however, certain, that it more frequently occurs in persons of a full and irritable habit of body

than in those who are weaker; and bleeding will, therefore, in many cases, be the most powerful means of preventing it. It is a matter of great importance that the patient should be in a state of rest, and in a recumbent posture. She should lie on a mattress, be kept cool, and enjoy a free air, Every thing taken as food or drink should be cool. The bowels should be opened by gentle laxative medicines, after which, if the flooding be great, glysters of a pint of cold water will be useful. At the early period, sedative medicines will be advisable—as from ten to thirty drops of laudanum, every three or four hours.

It is of great importance to restrain the flooding, as this is the cause of all the mischief. Of inward medicines, the best will be the mineral acids, as from ten to twenty drops of diluted vitriolic acid, taken in a glass of infusion of red roses, every four hours; this is applicable to the chronic kind of flooding, which sometimes precedes miscarriage for several days and even weeks. But when abortion is actually taking place, laudanum will be the most beneficial. Topical applications should also be had recourse to; cloths

dipped in vinegar and water should be applied over the lower part of the bowels. When faintness is very great we may sometimes be induced to employ wine and brandy, but they ought to be used with great caution.

It very seldom happens that manual assistance can be of any service to bring away the ovum; there is not room to introduce the hand into the womb. Upon some occasions, on passing the finger to the orifice of the womb, the ovum will be found lodged in it, and the finger may be got around it so as to bring it away.

When a patient has once miscarried, great care should be taken in subsequent pregnancies to endeavour to prevent it. When there is any appearance of fulness of the system, some blood should be lost. When it appears to arise from debility, this should be corrected by a proper diet, good air, and the use of tonic medicines. Upon some occasions there appears to be a local plethora about the uterus, accompanied by general debility; in these cases it will be proper to lose a small quantity of blood, and then to take bark and tonic medicines. Women themselves have an

idea that miscarriages generally arise from weakness; they, therefore, use a generous diet, and take a large quantity of animal food; but the contrary practice to this will, in the greater number of instances, be found most advantageous.

Anxiety of mind should be particularly guarded against:—the mere circumstance of being particularly desirous to have a family has, in many instances, been the means of preventing it. When the mind is dwelling on causes of affliction, it should be diverted by change of scene; travelling by easy stages, and the amusements of a watering place, where they can be obtained, will be advisable.

Those women who have borne many children are apt to become very corpulent, and have a great looseness of the integuments of the abdomen. This is attended with much inconvenience during the time of labour, if it has been neglected. The belly, in some cases, becomes so pendulous as to let the womb hang over the bones of the pelvis, against which the child is pressed, and a considerable retardment of the labour is the

consequence. Persons affected with this, should wear an abdominal bandage, as it will eminently tend to restore the tone of the parts, which has been injured by over-distension, and to relieve the unpleasant symptoms which ensue in consequence.

LEUCORRHŒA, OR FLUOR ALBUS.

THERE is a discharge issuing from the vagina, to which these terms have been applied, as well as the more familiar appellation, "The whites." This disease arises from two distinct causes; the one, in which there is an increased action of the vessels of the parts, and the other in which there is a want of tone, and debility exists. The first of these states is one of irritation, which, exciting the mucous membrane into undue action, produces an augmentation of its natural secretion, till at last there is a copious discharge; at first, thin and watery, then becoming thick and opaque;

this irritable state is soon accompanied by general as well as local disorder: the spirits become depressed, there is a general languor, inability to move, flutterings and palpitations at the heart, hysterical and other nervous affections, and a long train of most uncomfortable sensations, which harass and distress the patient. Various other symptoms not unfrequently accompany this state, such as long-continued pain in the back, a disordered state of the stomach and bowels, loss of appetite, wind in the stomach, headach, and sometimes bleeding at the nose. Women who are naturally plethoric, are more liable to this profuse secretion from these parts than those of a spare habit. Those who, during the middle period of life, indulge much in luxurious diet, and whose habits are sedentary, are more prone to this disease. They make a large quantity of blood, and though they may be plump, and have the appearance of health, they are weak, and lax, and overcome by every exertion. In the treatment of this species of fluor albus, our remedies must be directed as well towards the general constitution, as to remedy the disordered state

of the local complaints ; and any attempt, unadvisedly, to remove the discharge by astringent applications, might prove highly prejudicial. It will, in most instances, be advisable to take blood from the arm, and the fulness should further be guarded against by a sparser diet, and exercise. The following pill and draught may also be taken twice in the course of the week :—

Take of Precipitated sulphuret of antimony,
1 grain ;
Calomel, 3 grains ;
Conserve of roses, sufficient to form
a pill.

To be taken at bed-time ; and the ensuing morning a draught of

Sulphate of magnesia, 5 drachms ;
Infusion of roses, two ounces.—Mix.

If there should be symptoms of local fulness about the womb, leeches may be applied to the lower part of the abdomen with advantage. Soda water, made with the lemonated sodaic

powders, may be used as common drink, and will be found of great service. If the discharge continues after the disordered state of the system has been remedied, the following injection may be used with a syringe, three or four times a day:—

Take of Acetate of lead, 1 drachm;
Water, 1 quart.—Mix.

Or lime water may be employed in the same manner. Should these remedial agents not succeed, the lotions, which will hereafter be directed in the following species of the complaint, may be employed.

ON FLUOR ALBUS FROM DEBILITY.

THIS complaint may be induced by any causes that tend to produce debility of the system; as long diseases, profuse flooding, or anxiety of mind. Those persons who live in a moist atmosphere, who keep late hours,

and spend much of their time in bed, or who are much confined in hot rooms, are particularly apt to be affected by this species of the complaint. It sometimes arises from suckling too long.

This complaint is generally accompanied with pain in the back; the face becomes pale and bloated, and of a peculiar waxen sallowness. The feet and legs swell towards night, and a shortness of breathing succeeds, which is much increased on going up stairs, or lying down. Palpitations of the heart, and fainting fits likewise ensue. The appetite and digestion are impaired, and the patient is much distressed by flatulence. If the disease be not removed, hectic fever at length comes on, the difficulty of breathing increases, and serious consequences sometimes ensue.

The first indications in the treatment of this complaint are to correct any improper habits of life, and remedy the state of the general system. The country air will in most cases be beneficial. Exercise in a carriage, when it can be obtained, should be regularly used. What is called the chamber-horse, will be found a very useful substitute for it. The

diet should be of a light nourishing kind; and moderate quantities of port wine will be highly beneficial. The bowels should be kept in a regular state by the rhubarb pills, page 60, and the following draught taken three times a day:—

Take of Infusion of columba, 1 ounce and a half;

Diluted vitriolic acid, 10 drops;

Compound tincture of cardamom,

1 drachm.—Mix.

This will in general be found to agree with the stomach in the first instance: when the strength of it is in some degree restored, infusion of bark, and aromatic tincture of rhatany, may be used in place of the columba, and tincture of cardamom. In addition to which, two of the following pills may be taken night and morning:—

Take of Carbonate of iron, 1 drachm;

Extract of cascarilla, 2 ditto.—Mix.

Divide in thirty-six pills.

Cold sea-bathing will be found very useful, when no symptoms are present forbidding it, and the strength has been a little improved. The shower bath may be substituted for this, in some cases.

The local applications may be either of the following, used with a syringe; they may be tried in succession, should the first in order fail:—

Take of Alum, 2 drachms;

Water, 1 pint.—Mix.

Take of Alum, 2 drachms;

Sulphate of zinc, half a drachm;

Water, 1 pint and a half.—Mix.

Take of Alum, 1 drachm;

Decoction of oak bark, 1 pint.—Mix.

Or, a Decoction of nut galls.

Mr. Jewel, who has written a very ingenious work upon the subject of leucorrhœa, has very strongly recommended injections of nitrate of silver in solution, and has proved, from a number of cases in which he has tried it, that its effects are very certain in cases of vaginal discharge not dependent on disor-

ganized structure. The following injection he recommends three times a day to be used:—

Take of Nitrate of silver, 24 grains ;

Distilled water, 8 ounces.—Mix.

A sponge well saturated with this solution, or any of the lotions before recommended, may be introduced daily into the vagina.

Cold water is generally employed by females labouring under leucorrhœal discharge, under an idea that it is always serviceable in giving tone and strength to the parts, but this is frequently very fallacious ; and instead of this treatment, if one part of vinegar be added to two of lukewarm water, a much more satisfactory result, in most instances, will take place. Iced water injected will also be of service in many cases.

Fluor albus almost always attends organic diseases of the womb ; and these cases should be carefully distinguished from those which arise merely from disordered action, as the use of astringent injections in the former might prove injurious. Those cases in which it occurs after the entire cessation of the menses,

may be suspected to arise from organic disease; it will therefore be prudent, in those instances, to take the opinion of a surgeon.

ITCHING OF THE EXTERNAL PARTS.

THIS is a very distressing complaint, sometimes amounting to a degree of intolerable suffering. It frequently accompanies organic disease of the womb, and on its removal must then depend the cure of the primary disease: sometimes it occurs independently of any other complaint, and in those cases we have never known the following lotion or the ointment fail to remove it:—

Take of Almond emulsion, 12 ounces;
Spirit of wine, 1 ounce;
Oxymuriate of mercury, 8 grains.
—Mix.

To be applied two or three times a day.

Take of Blue ointment,
Citrine ointment, each 2 drachms.
—Mix.

Apply a small quantity night and morning to the parts affected. In the intermediate time, they may be frequently fomented with warm milk and water.

INVOLUNTARY DISCHARGES OF URINE FROM THE BLADDER.

THE involuntary discharge of urine from the bladder may be either constant or occasional; when occurring during pregnancy, it is a matter of course of little consequence, and all that can be done is to sew flat sponges into the folds of a napkin for constant use. If it proceeds from general or local debility, large quantities of cold water dashed against the parts two or three times a day, cold bathing, and the following mixture, should be employed.

102 INVOLUNTARY DISCHARGES OF URINE.

Take of Decoction of bark, 7 ounces and a half;

Diluted sulphuric acid, thirty drops.

—Mix.

A wine-glassful twice or three times a day.

Or,

Take of Infusion of chirayita, 8 ounces ;

Subcarbonate of Soda, 2 drachms.

—Mix.

Two or three table-spoonsful three times a day.

Or,

Take of Essence of the buchu leaves, 4 drachms ;

Decoction of marshmallow root, 4 ounces.—Mix.

Two table-spoonsful twice a day.

Small quantities of fluids are to be drank, and flannel should be worn, that the determination of fluids to the exterior may be promoted as much as is possible.—See my Treatise on Morbid Irritability of the Bladder and the use of the Buchu Leaves.

OF STERILITY OR BARRENNESS.

THIS appears to take place under two distinct states of the system. The first, and to which the term is strictly applicable, is that which prevents conception or impregnation: the other, to which, however, the term sterility cannot properly be applied, is that in which, from various causes, the connexion between the mother and the embryo is soon destroyed. The latter is by far the most frequent occurrence.

It is obvious that for the fulfilment of the intention of nature in this respect, the womb, and parts essentially connected with generation, must be perfect; and such is the care of nature for the continuance of the species, that failure from the want of this is very rare. It sometimes arises from imperfection in the formation of the ova. But as this class of causes can only be understood by a thorough knowledge of the physiology of the body, and are by no means usual, and, in the greater number of instances, beyond the power of our art, we

shall pass them over in this work, as being intended principally for popular study, to the consideration of the second class of causes of sterility.

Those are, principally, too great irritability of constitution, a plethoric state of the system, great general, and particularly local, debility; all those diseases which tend particularly to produce weakness and irritability of the womb, as excessive menstruation, fluor albus, and tumours of the part.

. The most frequent cause appears to be too great irritability of the womb.

We frequently find, in persons of an irritable habit of body, a variety of symptoms arising in the period intermediate between menstruation; which evidently indicate sympathy with the uterus, and would lead us to suppose that impregnation had taken place; and this opinion seems to be confirmed by what happens at the subsequent menstrual period. It is usually preceded and accompanied by pain in the loins and down the thighs; and frequently sickness at the stomach. When the evacuation takes place, portions of a membranous substance will be found intermixed with it, similar to that

which lines the womb preparatory to the reception of the embryo. This may take place in two different states of the system; those of debility, and excessive fulness of the vessels: the latter is by far the most frequent. We observe that women who are fat and full of blood, rarely breed so well as those who are of a thin spare habit.

Barrenness is sometimes accompanied with fluor albus; and that disease is, in those instances, considered as the cause of it; but this is for the most part erroneous: they are both dependant on some morbid state of the womb; frequently tumours, and sometimes ulceration about its orifice.

We have seen some cases in which the disordered state of the functions of the womb appeared to arise from sympathy with disease of the stomach and bowels, accompanied with distressing indigestion.

The common practice of attempting to remedy this defect by stimulants and luxurious diet is, in most cases, improper; for, as we before observed, it is in the greater number of instances owing to a plethoric state of the system. Moderate and judicious abstraction

of blood, a restricted diet, and the use of sedatives, will be more advantageous. When it evidently arises from relaxation of the parts, the use of tonic medicines, as steel and bark, may be had recourse to; and, in these cases, an abdominal bandage* should be constantly worn. When it appears to arise from an indolent state of the ovaries, electricity may be tried. The womb is very liable to be affected by sympathy with diseases of almost every part of the body, and particularly with the stomach and bowels; therefore it will be necessary to pay particular attention to those organs. The bowels of females who do not use much exercise are very apt to be confined; this, in France, is obviated by the daily use of lavements, from which the most beneficial effects are derived; but there is a degree of prejudice against the use of them in this country.

We must again repeat, that this defect will be most frequently removed by the antiphlogistic treatment; and we may say, that by adopting it more than is usually done, we have been particularly successful in our endeavours

* Made by Mr. Shoolbred, 34, Jermyn-street, St. James's.

to obviate this defect, which is often the cause of so much anxiety and distress.

FALLING OF THE WOMB.

THIS is a complaint, in which the womb descends from its natural situation into the vagina, and sometimes entirely passes through the external parts, forming a tumour there of about the size of an ordinary melon. The immediate causes of it are a relaxation of those ligaments by which it should be supported in its natural position, and a want of due tone or strength of the vagina, which should assist in sustaining it; the first permitting it to fall, the second allowing it to be received into its cavity. Therefore, whatever is capable of producing a lengthened state of the ligaments, or a relaxed state of the vagina, may become the occasional cause of the complaint. This is sometimes general weakness of the system; and, therefore, after long diseases, and profuse discharges, particularly of blood, which have

diminished the patient's strength, it is occasionally met with. But the most common cause is a long-continued erect posture of the body, at an early period after delivery, and, in some cases, after abortion; at this time the patient is not only weakened, but the womb weighs eight or ten times more than it does in the usual state, and is carried down by its own weight.

Patients are often inclined to think, that their medical attendants oppose their leaving bed for a length of time that is quite unnecessary; and it is very common for them to disobey their directions in this, as well as many other respects. But this advice is given from having frequent occasion to observe the evils that ensue from a contrary practice. When they are inclined to leave their bed, they should not sit in a chair, but lie on a sofa, or outside of the bed, until the third or fourth week after delivery; at which time the womb will have regained its usual size, and the ligaments and vagina their former strength. It is a question sometimes asked, What then becomes of women in the lower ranks of life, who cannot give up this length of time to the

recovery of their strength? These women suffer from this complaint very frequently; but, because they are not seen confined to bed, it is not to be thought that there is no necessity for confinement. They are often great sufferers, but they are frequently unknown. Those who are liable to violent coughs during their confinement after childbirth, are especially the subjects of this complaint, from the pressure made upon the womb during the strong action of the diaphragm and abdominal muscles, when the vagina can afford no assistance in supporting it.

The *symptoms* in this complaint arise partly from the effects produced on the circumjacent parts by the change in the situation of the womb, and partly from sympathy. At the commencement there is pain in the back, with a sensation of dragging and bearing down; pain is also felt about the groins; there is a sense of fulness in these parts, and a discharge of mucus from the vagina. The pain and bearing down generally cease as soon as the patient assumes a recumbent posture. Strangury, or a frequent painful and straining inclination to pass the urine, is sometimes

present ; and considerable uneasiness is also felt on going to stool. The symptoms arising from the sympathy between the stomach and womb are very distressing. The appetite becomes irregular, or is totally lost ; the stomach and bowels lose their tone, and are much distended with air ; the spirits sink, every employment becomes irksome, and life itself is scarcely desirable. The diaphragm is sometimes affected with spasm, and hiccough is produced. The appetite being diminished, and the digestion impaired, considerable weakness of the system is necessarily produced, and the vessels of the womb, partaking of the general debility, permit blood to escape as well as the natural secretion, which contributes to exhaust the strength.

The womb, in some cases, merely falls into the cavity of the vagina, but, in others, it protrudes beyond the external parts : in the latter case, from exposure to the air, and the friction it suffers, ulceration usually takes place upon its surface, in small patches, which are surrounded by a good deal of inflammation. Slight degrees of this complaint can only be ascertained by great attention to the state of

the parts, together with a knowledge of the common size and length of that part of the womb which hangs down into the vagina. It may be distinguished from other tumours, by the existence of the orifice of the womb at the lower part of it. The curative intentions in this disease, are to increase the strength of the parts which are weak, and to afford a support to the tumour. The first may be fulfilled by the use of the cold-bath, and by the application of cold water to the parts, several times a day. Astringent injections, thrown up the vagina by means of a proper syringe, will also be serviceable. As the following:—

Take of Sulphate of zinc,
Alum, of each half a dracham;
Water, 2 pints.—Mix.

To be used three or four times a day.

Or a decoction of oak bark, or nut galls, may be used in the same way. Tonic medicines may also be given internally with advantage; as a wine-glassful of infusion of rhatany root, with ten drops of diluted vitriolic acid, three times a day; or the following:—

Take of Infusion of Peruvian bark, 2 ounces ;
Diluted vitriolic acid, 10 drops ;
Aromatic tincture of rhatany, 1 drachm.
Mix.

For a draught, to be taken two or three times a day.

Dr. Hutchinson's tonic mixture, recommended by Sir. J. Jervis, in the 28th No. of the Gazette of Health, is well adapted for this purpose.

The bowels should be carefully attended to, in order to prevent straining from costiveness, or tenesmus. When opening medicine is required, castor oil will, generally, be found to answer best. And if tenesmus and griping be troublesome, from five to ten drops of laudanum may be taken two or three times a day, in any simple aromatic water. If castor oil should disagree with the stomach, two or three of the alkaline extract of rhubarb pills (p. 60) will be the best substitute for it; or half an ounce of Epsom salts, in infusion of roses. Sea-bathing, when it can be obtained, will sometimes be particularly beneficial. The diet should be nutritious; and a moderate quantity

of good malt liquor, may be taken. The patient should lie as much as possible upon a bed or upon a sofa; and a mattress, at night, is preferable to a bed of feathers.

We have now to consider the best means of supporting the parts. This will be effected by an instrument called a pessary. They are made of various shapes and substances; but the best is that made of box wood, of an oval shape, flat, and with a hole in the middle, large enough for the insertion of the finger.* After replacing the uterus, as far as possible, in its natural situation, one of these, of a proper size, previously oiled, is to be introduced, as far as possible, up the vagina, and constantly retained there. Some care is necessary in the introduction of it; the patient should lie on her back, and place the instrument between the external parts, so that one edge will be turned towards the anterior, the other towards the posterior part; it is then to be moved in a circular direction on its own axis, pressing it backwards, and carrying it gently upwards to the part to which it is to be

* These may be obtained of any surgical instrument maker.

carried; it is then to be turned, and placed with its longest diameter crossways, so that the womb may rest on one of its broad surfaces. As the parts recover their tone, and become more contracted, the instrument may be changed for a smaller one.

The abdominal bandage, recommended p. 106, will be found of eminent service in contributing to retain the womb in its proper situation, and give tone to the weakened parts.

When pregnancy takes place, this complaint always disappears after the fourth month, as the womb then rises above the pelvis, and is prevented by its size from falling. In this case, great care should be taken not to assume the erect posture too early after delivery. The patient should keep her bed for several weeks, until the parts have recovered their strength; by which means, the recurrence of the disease will, in general, be prevented.

FALLING OF THE BLADDER.

THIS complaint, being attended with some symptoms of the one last noticed, has been

confounded with it. The bladder may either descend a little lower than its natural situation, or it may fall so low as to become a tumour, projecting between the external parts. This complaint, like the former, will be most likely to occur when the vagina is relaxed, as after childbirth; but it may happen at any other period of life. It is the posterior part of the bladder which descends, or that which lies behind the urinary passage. It will generally be found that those who are afflicted with it have been subject to violent coughs.

The symptoms, in some respects, resemble those of falling of the womb; but some of the latter are wanting, and others, not present in that complaint, are met with in this. There is the same weight felt, and sensation of bearing down: when there is much urine contained in the bladder, the patient is more uncomfortable than at other times. The tumour seldom goes away entirely, because some urine generally remains in the bladder, even immediately after the patient supposes she has emptied it. A mucous discharge often attends it, from the irritation of the vagina; the quantity of which varies. In some cases it is very profuse. The

peculiar symptom which marks this complaint is a pain and tightness across the navel, particularly when the bladder is nearly full. This arises from the upper ligament of the bladder which is attached to that part, being put upon the stretch. The stomach is not affected in this complaint, as in that of the falling womb. The appearance of the tumour is also different; the absence of the orifice of the womb at the lower part of it will clearly distinguish it from the complaint before described.

In the treatment, the hollow pessary of a globular form, or in the shape of an egg, will be found most convenient. The abdominal bandage, and astringent lotions, directed page 111, may also be used in this case. And, should the system be in a debilitated state, the same general remedies may be enjoyed.

INVERSION OF THE WOMB.

THIS complaint consists in an inversion of the cavity of the womb, so that the upper part comes through its orifice; consequently that

part which was formerly the inside of a cavity, is converted into the outside of a tumour, either contained in the vagina, or projecting from it. The disease is not so frequently met with as it was formerly, from the improved state of the art of midwifery; as it most usually proceeds from mismanagement of the after-birth. In cases of retention of that substance, it was formerly the custom to pull at the navel string, instead of introducing the hand to separate it, by which the womb, being in a relaxed state, has sometimes come along with it, being in a manner turned inside outward. It is, consequently, a complaint almost peculiar to those who have borne children. But it sometimes, though very rarely, affects unmarried women, from a peculiar tumour being formed in the womb, called a polypus, which passing through the orifice of the womb, drags down that organ with it.

The immediate consequences of an inverted womb, when it takes place after delivery, are flooding, faintness, and a sense of fulness in the vagina. When this disease is discovered early, it may generally be removed without difficulty. By gradually pressing on the lower

part of the tumour, it will be restored to its natural situation. If the after-birth be still adherent, it should be allowed to remain until this is effected; as if it be removed while the womb is inverted, excessive flooding may ensue, from its not being able to contract and close the vessels in that situation. When it is returned, with the after-birth attached to it, it will then be in the same state as a common case of retention, and should be treated as such. But if the accident be not discovered until after some time, there may be difficulty, and indeed an impossibility of reducing it, from the orifice contracting so firmly around the neck of the womb, as to prevent the body passing through: and the difficulty and danger of the case may also be increased, by inflammation having attacked the part. But as it is a case in which the assistance of a medical practitioner will be absolutely necessary, we shall not enter further into the consideration of it in this work. We have made these observations, that patients may be aware of the nature of the accident, when it occurs, and by timely information much future ill may be prevented.

FLESHY TUMOURS, AND POLYPUS OF THE
WOMB.

THESE are tumours, various in shape and consistence, growing from the inner surface of the womb. In some cases there is only one tumour; in others there are several. Their form differs very much; they are most commonly of an oblong spherical form. These tumours are sometimes not larger than a nut; sometimes they weigh several pounds. This disease is sometimes mistaken for a dropsy of the ovaries, and for pregnancy. It may, however, be generally distinguished from dropsy by the firmness of the tumour, and the want of fluctuation. It is only in the early stages of the fleshy tubercle, or polypus of the womb, that this can be mistaken for pregnancy; because, when the womb in pregnancy rises above the brim of the pelvis, the motion of the child may be felt. The tumour of pregnancy after this time increases quickly; that of polypus slowly. In pregnancy the stomach becomes affected, and the breasts enlarge and are painful—

changes which do not in general occur in polypus of the womb.

No dependance is to be placed upon the state of menstruation; because in pregnancy, coloured discharges occasionally take place, and in the disease of which we are treating, the menses are sometimes wholly obstructed.

This is not a very uncommon disease, and it affects women at all periods of life. Married and unmarried are alike liable to it. These tumours have no disposition to ulcerate, neither does maturation take place in them. They are frequently connected with dropsy of one of the appendixes to the uterus, called the ovaries. They are generally accompanied by a mucous discharge, sometimes mixed with blood. The other symptoms are, for the most part, such as arise from the mechanical effect of the tumour. There is a frequent disposition to go to stool, and also to make water. The legs are sometimes affected with cramp, from its pressing on the nerves going to them: and there is a puffy swelling of the feet and ancles from its pressing on the vessels which conduct the water from the lower extremities. When the tumour becomes so large, as nearly to fill the cavity of

the pelvis, there may be great difficulty in passing the fæces, and a total inability of emptying the bladder. The weight of it, and its pressure upon the parts at the lower aperture of the pelvis, will occasion a sense of bearing down. The constitution is seldom much affected. This disease does not appear to be influenced by medicines internally exhibited, or by external applications. Cramp will generally be relieved by lying for a short time in a horizontal posture: and if there should be much difficulty in voiding the fæces, a lavement may be injected every morning. Friction with liniments containing opium, may be usefully employed in cases where much uneasiness is excited in parts surrounding the tumour. The circumstance that requires most particular attention, is the state of the bladder. Retention of urine from the pressure against the neck of it, is one of the earliest and most distressing symptoms. In some cases the patient will be capable of voiding small quantities, if she lay upon her back with the hips raised by pillows a little from the bed. But, in other cases, it will be necessary to draw it off by an instrument called a catheter. Patients, by a

little attention, may be enabled to introduce this instrument themselves. The catheter should be rather more curved for this complaint than those generally used: the patient should lie on a bed or sofa, and, having oiled the instrument, it is to be gently introduced almost in a direction directly upward close to the belly,—if any difficulty should occur from the weight and pressure of the tumour, the fore-finger should be introduced into the vagina, and the tumour should be so raised, that room may be made for the passage of the instrument between it and the bones of the pelvis. When it has passed about an inch and a half, it has reached the neck of the bladder, which always opposes some resistance to its further passage; but this is easily overcome by a little gentle steady pressure forward of the instrument. It is necessary to give a caution not to let go the catheter, as it may slip wholly into the bladder.

It may be necessary, occasionally, to have recourse to those medicines which diminish the painful sensations that arise from irritation; and for this purpose henbane will be found very serviceable; from three to seven grains of

the extract, in a pill, may be taken two or three times a day, or from two to five drops of the solution of acetate of morphine in a glass of any simple aromatic water.

Such are the symptoms arising from those tumours which have a broad and short basis; but that which has a long slender stalk, and to which the name of polypus has been given, is productive of symptoms which vary in some degree from those just described. The tumour does not in general attain so large a size; consequently the symptoms arising from pressure on the parts within the pelvis are not so urgent; and when the polypus attains a certain bulk, it reaches the orifice of the womb, dilates it, and passes through it into the vagina.

Polypuses generally grow from the upper part of the womb, and the weight of the tumour then depending from this part, brings on many disagreeable symptoms; as bearing down, pain, and irritation; and sickness, and disorder of the stomach from sympathy. This species of tumour may, in general, be removed by a ligature; and when it has arrived at this state, it should be done without delay, as the symptoms it induces are exhausting the strength of

the patient. But, as it must of course be done by a surgeon, it will be useless to treat of it in this place. We must however observe, that a natural separation sometimes takes place: this may occur either from the weight becoming too great for the slender stalk to bear, or from inflammation attacking it, or the neck of the womb acting upon it as a ligature.

OF SCHIRRHUS, AND CANCER OF THE WOMB.

THIS disease most frequently occurs soon after the cessation of the menses. It is at this period that the due balance between the action of the secretory arteries and absorbent vessels of that organ is most liable to be destroyed. The notion that cancer arises from a specific poison in the system, or is a constitutional disease, is certainly erroneous; it has its origin from the same causes with other tumours. When the secretory arteries continue to perform their functions, while the absorbents cease

to remove the superfluous matter, an increase in bulk, of the part thus deranged, must necessarily ensue; in other words, a tumour must be formed. We find that when this takes place in a bone, a bony tumour is formed; when in cellular substance, a fleshy or fatty tumour; and when it affects a gland, that firm, compact substance, which constitutes the structure of glands, is the result, and it is this last which constitutes that hard, scirrhus tumour, which is called cancer. When this disordered state of parts has taken place, it is evident that, unless a change be effected, the size of the tumour must progressively increase, until at length it presses on the surrounding parts, so as to obstruct the vessels which supplied it with blood; it then becomes an extraneous body: decomposition takes place in it, and it excites the surrounding parts to ulceration; and the irritation of the matter consequent on decomposition, affects the absorbent vessels, causing inflammation and swelling of them. By this theory, all the symptoms, and the progress of the disease, may be satisfactorily explained; and it will also necessarily lead to the adoption of that mode

of treatment which experience has proved to be most efficacious.

The symptoms of cancer in the early stage, are but trifling, and it frequently continues for several years before they excite much attention, particularly in those who lead a temperate life.

A sense of weight in the vagina, and a mucous discharge, are usually those first perceived. This mucous discharge is sometimes tinged with blood, and particularly when the patient indulges too much in eating or drinking, or when the food has been of a stimulating quality. Violent exercise will sometimes cause an effusion of blood, in such a large quantity as to produce great weakness, and occasionally fainting. Generally, whilst there are discharges of blood in moderate quantity, the tumour remains stationary. If menstruation have not ceased, it becomes irregular, and is more profuse than it ought to be. The symptoms produced by the mechanical effect of tumours of the uterus are seldom of much consequence in this disease, as the size of it is not often considerable. When pain comes on, the stomach and bowels usually become disordered.

Even in the early stages of this disease the stomach will be liable to be, in some degree, affected; though the more severe affections of this organ do not generally attack the patient till the ulceration has commenced. Upon an examination, the neck of the womb will be found thickened, and with a resisting feel, resembling that of gristle; or a distinct tumour will be perceived arising from some part of the neck of the womb, the others remaining healthy. In either case, pressure upon the diseased parts will be productive of pain, and a sensation like that of moving a hard body. The neck of the womb will also be found to have undergone a change. It becomes larger than natural, and feels as if surrounded by a thick, firm, irregular ring.

As soon as the existence of the disease is ascertained, the most vigorous measures should be adopted to check its progress. The starving system, with the restriction from animal food, which is generally employed, is improper; it reduces the body to a state of great debility, without permanent advantage, and will prevent the use of the means we have found most efficacious in the treatment of this

disease. The treatment we would strongly recommend, from a conviction of its beneficial effects from experience, is that of bleeding, frequently repeated. There is nothing tends so much to favour the mutation of the body as the frequent abstraction of blood, in moderate quantities; the balance between the action of the secretory and absorbent vessels, is much increased in favour of the latter after the loss of blood; and we have, by this means, seen tumours which, if suffered to proceed, would, no doubt, have terminated in cancer, perfectly removed. The diet should, therefore, be such as will enable the system to bear the loss of blood; it should not be stimulating, but light and nourishing. We have found persons, in general, bear the loss of ten or twelve ounces of blood, once a fortnight, without material injury.

The external parts may also be rubbed every night with a portion, about the size of a nut, of the following ointment:—

Take of Prepared calomel, $\frac{1}{2}$ a drachm.

Spermaceti ointment, 2 ounces.—Mix.

Of the efficacy of the preparations of gold, we have spoken in several numbers of the Gazette of Health. The decoction of marsh-mallow root, has been of service. The state of the general health should be carefully attended to, as much will depend on a due regulation of that. The bowels should be kept freely open by glysters; and the complaints of the stomach palliated by light bitter medicines, and the use of carbonated soda water as common drink.

When ulceration has taken place, the use of opium must be had recourse to, for the purpose of moderating the pain and bearing down, and effusion of blood, which usually accompanies it. The use of a lotion of the sulphate of iron, in the following form, injected with a syringe, will here be of considerable service.

Take of Sulphate of iron, 1 drachm.

Barley water, 1 pint.—Mix.

Violent exercise must be avoided; and the patient should lie in a recumbent posture the greater part of the day. When the disease has made a certain progress, our assistance,

we regret to say, is little more than palliative ; but much alleviation will be experienced from the moderate use of opium, the lotion above recommended, quietness, and a light, cooling diet.

ON VIRGINITY.

AMONG the questions that have been agitated by medical men, for the various purposes of society, few appear to be more important than the proofs which are to be found that a female has not lost the state of purity in which she was created. The laws of every country, from the earliest period, have guarded her from violation, and from any mischief which could take from her that which, in the unmarried state, is considered the pride and ornament of her youth. So much of the happiness, the security, and the virtue of mankind is dependent upon the decorum, the modest feelings, and the chastity of woman, that it cannot be a matter of surprise that

this subject should have been investigated with the deepest attention. Every doubt, every difference of opinion, has been allowed in favour of the female, so that much difficulty has been found to exist as to what may be decidedly affirmed to be the proofs of virginity.

That which was considered formerly absolutely a sign that it no longer existed, namely, the breaking down of the membrane to which the term hymen has been applied, has been acknowledged to be no actual proof, without other appearances combined with it, upon which conviction might be founded.

The following are the appearances which present themselves on examination of the external organs of generation, where the sense of honour and the pride of virtue may be said to exist without the possibility of a doubt being excited. The external labia are hard, firm, thick, elastic, of a rosy or vermillion hue, brought together so as completely to close over the vulva; the hymen entire, the nymphæ small and united; the clitoris with a small prepuce; the rugæ of the vagina elevated, the orifice of the vagina contracted, its mucous follicles smooth; the orifice of the urethra

very narrow. The hymen is so called from the Greek word signifying a membrane; it has the appearance of a crescent, and hence Diana, the goddess of virginity, is described as wearing that emblem upon her head. It is formed by four angular duplicatures of the membrane of the vagina; at the upper part there is an aperture for the transmission of the menses, which gives this shape to it. It is a natural structure, although many able anatomists have declared that they have only seen it where disease has existed, and therefore have denied that its presence is either essential or healthy. By sexual intercourse it is ruptured, and is shrivelled into small excrescences in the orifice of the vagina.

It undoubtedly is liable to various accidents, by which it becomes ruptured, and is much changed in appearance under different circumstances; its presence, therefore, cannot be considered as an unequivocal proof of virginity. Much has been said on the possibility of the hymen being renewed by certain local astringents, and a spurious reparation of the injury sustained during coition has been attempted; but this cannot occur. It is true

that lotions, such as the compound alum wash, formed of equal parts of alum and sulphate of zinc,—half an ounce of each to two pints of boiling water,—has been found a serviceable astringent: the decoction of oak bark, and similar means, have been employed to give a temporary firmness and healthiness, but they cannot reinstate the hymen after its rupture.

The vagina, in a healthy virgin, should be tense, rigid, firm, and narrow; for its only function is to allow the menstrual fluid to escape through it. However, from indisposition, or from accidental weakness, it may become lax, and its natural rugæ may be obliterated. Bad habits will produce effects precisely similar to those which are attendant upon sexual intercourse.

By the Mosaic laws (Deut. xxii.) the effusion of blood was considered the indisputable token of virginity; and, lest the husband should imagine his wife did not possess this virtue, it was ordered that the maid's parents should keep the nuptial sheets as evidence: and, to this day, some tribes on the banks of the Indus preserve this custom. Occasionally the flow of blood, during the first coition, is very

great; but this is not always the case, and some difficulty may arise in distinguishing it from the menses; for although this secretion does not generally coagulate, yet, when it is transmitted in large quantities it is mixed sometimes with blood. The defloration of a young female is easily discoverable if it has lately taken place, from the general appearance of the labia, but these disappear in a few days. In women long habituated to connexion, the external labia are soft, flaccid, pale, and separated, and the rugæ of the vagina have disappeared.

With regard to the absurd stories that virginity may be known by various amulets and charms, and by different external signs, they are unworthy of notice; but the pride and virtuous bearing of an uncontaminated mind gives to the whole body an air of innocence and of truth, which nothing can ever efface.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE DISEASES TO WHICH THE FEMALE IS LIABLE.

HAVING thus concluded the nature and treatment of the most important maladies to which women are more immediately subject, it is now only necessary to point out the necessity of minutely attending to all those precautions by which the general health is maintained. A sense of delicacy so frequently prevents the female from informing, at an early stage of the disease, the practitioner of the symptoms which affect her, that opportunities are frequently lost of obviating them; and that which at first was of easy cure, appears under its most aggravated form. Hence the information which this little volume contains is most valuable; and whenever any of those affections which are here described arise, by referring to the proper heads such rules of management are given as will enable the sufferer to take steps of the greatest advantage to herself; and, by these means, all those symptoms of high irritation, that overpowering state of debility, and that great disturbance

of the constitution, which may from neglect attend a malady of little importance, will altogether be avoided.

The two great discharges which take place are those to which the attention is most particularly to be directed; namely, the menstrual, and the mucous, for these are the great sources of health and of disease: whilst these secretions are properly performed, the female constitution, however other diseases may exist, is said to be in its ordinary state; but either the unusual flow, or the total absence of these secretions, is disorder; and the effect is great upon the general state of health. When the uterus is in any way affected, the nervous system more or less sympathizes with it, and then arise a long train of maladies, which incapacitate the sufferer from following her usual occupations, and also lay the foundation for organic mischief. Besides this, in a short time the stomach and digestive organs lose their wonted tone, their energies become impaired, nutrition can no longer be properly performed, and hence debility in its worst form arises.

Another point which must be dwelt upon,

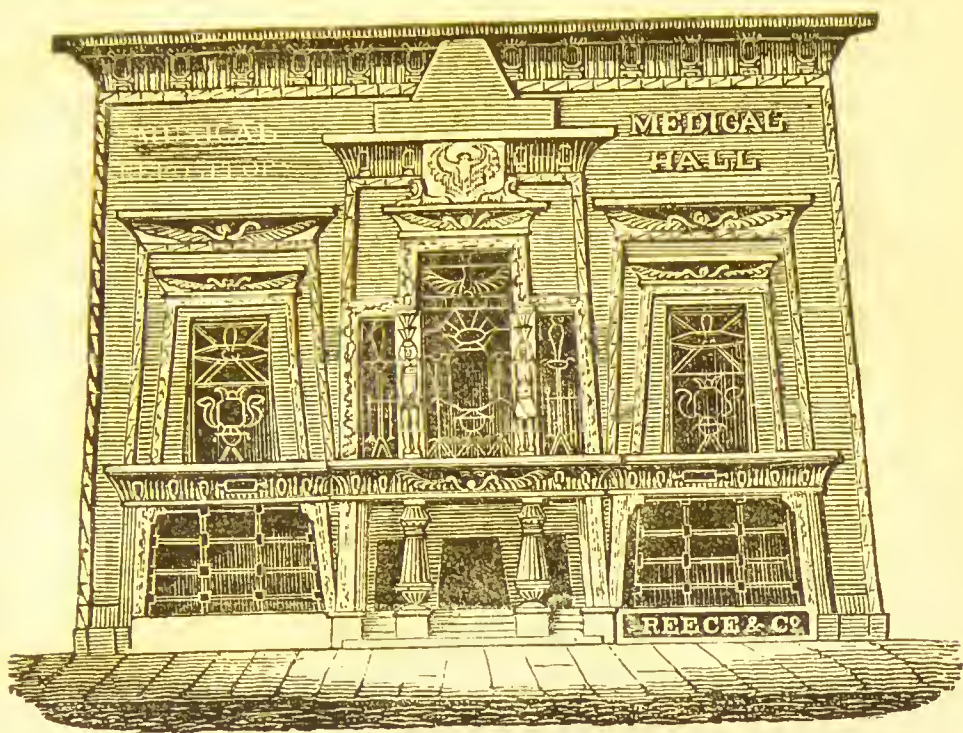
is the habitual attention to the state of the bowels. Costiveness is the cause of infinite mischief; without exaggeration, it may be said, that more misery has been caused by inattention to this natural duty, than by any affliction to which the human race has been subject. To great cleanliness, to the keeping the pores of the skin free from accumulation of sores,—to general and local bathing, much of strong, good health is to be attributed. In the autumn sea-bathing should, generally speaking, be recommended. The importance of the proper secretions from the skin should at all times be recollected; and here the necessity of proper clothing, according to the season of the year, should be fully and carefully attended to. The wearing flannel during the winter, and the caution of not carelessly exposing the surface of the skin during perspiration to the constriction of the cold air, should strongly be inculcated. At the menstrual period, this is still more strongly to be enforced; and hence, danger will be avoided.

All ligatures should be carefully avoided; tight-lacing has been the source of so much spinal deformity and of mischief, that the care

of parents cannot sufficiently be directed to this point. The state of tension in which the muscles of the back, by which they become rigid, and their alternate contraction and relaxation, is forbidden, is often most fatal to the happiness of women. In Numbers 9, 10, and 11 of the *Monthly Gazette of Practical Medicine*, will be found some observations on Spinal Disease and Distortions, which cannot be too often perused, and more especially by mothers.

Having thus pointed out that which constitutes the essential points of attention, it is only to be hoped, that this small volume will have the desired effect of being an useful manual, by which the fair sex may be enabled to distinguish, prevent, and cure, the various states of disease, to which they are by nature prone.

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